

Friday November 8 1996

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The Guardian International

Printed in London, Manchester, Frankfurt and Roubaix

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

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Friday Review

With European weather



All you really, really want to know about Wallypop



Ambush in Nicaragua: on tour with Ken Loach

Taking Carla's Song home

Nolan puts MPs on trial

'No party politics' in Hamilton inquiry

David Hencke Westminster Correspondent

Lord Nolan, the life peer appointed by John Major to lay down higher standards of behaviour in Parliament, last night warned MPs not to play party politics in deciding the fate of the former minister, Neil Hamilton, and colleagues in the cash for questions scandal.

In a tough speech to dons at Warwick University, he said the House of Commons itself had contributed to a loss of public confidence in its ability to maintain proper standards of conduct.

allegations. Lord Nolan praised the Commons, despite initial misgivings, for introducing procedures which closely followed the recommendations by his committee, including the appointment of Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards.

He also thought it was better that Parliament rather than judges like himself policed its own behaviour. No-one with a knowledge of constitutional history would want a return to the battles between Parliament and the judiciary, he said.

The investigation which is now in progress, in what I might call the Hamilton case, is going to be the most difficult conceivable test for the new machinery, because the alleged actions under investigation occurred when the old, less satisfactory and, as I have said, inconsistent rules were in place.

Hint of disruption in Dublin



French security forces guard the summit venue in Bordeaux, scene of a bomb attack by Corsican guerrillas last month

PHOTOGRAPH: REGIS DUVAIGNAU

Major crows over 'paralysed' France

'Our economy stronger' says PM on eve of Chirac summit

Even MacAuliff in Bordeaux and Michael White

JOHN Major yesterday gave an electioneering twist to today's Franco-British summit when he criticised the French economy as "paralysed by walkouts" and hinted at disruption of the EU's December summit in Dublin if his concerns are not addressed.

Hours before dinner with President Chirac last night, the Prime Minister contrasted the British economy — "growing stronger" — with the badly performing economies of Europe, singling out France's high youth unemployment and strike record.

Dublin agenda



disrupt the summit unless there were concessions on fishing quotas and EU moves to impose a maximum 48-hour working week on Britain. A European Court ruling next Monday is expected to favour the EU's maximum 48-hour working week.

related to European integration. They were highlighted yesterday by Dick Spring, foreign minister of Ireland which is currently chairing the EU. He told reporters in London that the EU's Irish presidency remains determined to keep to agreed timetables on a single currency and the Maastricht review conference — including deci-

Interviewed before leaving for the annual bilateral with senior French ministers, Mr Major claimed that average families are £700 a year better off than in 1992.

"That's why the pulse of Britain is growing stronger," he told the London Evening Standard. "Compare that with what is happening in the rest of Europe. Youth unemployment in Britain is 15 per cent — still too high — but in France it's well over 26 per cent.

In Britain, we've seen the number of days lost to strikes fall to the lowest ever. In France, many of their public services have been paralysed by walkouts.

Mr Major is being accompanied on the visit by senior Cabinet colleagues, including Malcolm Rifkind, Kenneth Clarke, Michael Portillo, Nicholas Howard and Sir George Young.

The meeting — to be held in the mayor's headquarters bombed last month by Corsican guerrillas — is intended to improve relations, but the agenda has been overtaken by a series of difficult issues

sions within week's of Britain's expected general election in May. France and Britain agree on most issues on today's agenda. But there is friction over Zaira, with the French pressing for an international military effort and Britain resisting.

French 'poised to invade Britain', page 6

Shell has rethink over Nigeria

Oil giant will embrace human rights in business principles

Simon Beavie and Paul Brown

SHELL, the Anglo-Dutch oil giant, yesterday tried to quash 18 months of international vilification for its role in Nigeria and its environmental record by announcing it is to include a specific reference to human rights in its general statement of business principles.

The move follows a series of meetings with human rights groups. It comes two days before the first anniversary of what John Major called the "judicial murder" of Ken Saro-Wiwa, the Ogoni leader who was executed by the Nigerian regime for his protests over Shell's exploitation of his homeland.

A spokesman for the company said last night that Shell was currently reviewing its business principles statement and "looking positively" at including a clear reference to human rights.

The Shell announcement was prompted by an earlier statement from the Dutch Christian group Pax Christi and Amnesty International which said the oil group had indicated in meetings that it would incorporate the declaration.

The pressure groups also said that Shell would declare that "it is legitimate for [Shell] to speak out against serious violations of human rights" and that its principle of political non-interference would be "redefined".



'The Hamilton investigation is going to be the most difficult conceivable test for the new machinery'

Lord Nolan (left), yesterday

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Sketch

Put-down routine fails to stand up



Simon Hoggart

LAWN Order is the hot topic in the Commons these days, so yesterday MPs debated Michael Heseltine's lawn. You may remember that last month he woke up to discover a group of people digging up the grass in front of his house, as a protest against open cast mining.

Mr Major is away at the Anglo-French summit, so it was the Deputy Prime Minister who answered questions on his behalf. Edward Garnier (C Harborough) asked about "the gang of thugs which included two Labour councillors" who had dug the dirt at Heseltine Hall. He called attention to "the pathetic performance of the smarmy army opposite".

This is what I find scary: we no longer deal in soundbites in the Commons, which are thought far too long-winded, but in poster slogans. Even the Chinese Communist Party offers more intellectual meat than our Parliament: "Endorse the Great Leap Forward to Industrial Prosperity and Fulfillment under the Wise Helmsmanship of the Supreme Leader Deng Xiaoping and Reject the Corrupt Infiltrations of the Tango Dancer Patten," for instance.

John Prescott asked why the Tories had voted against the founding of the NHS, 50 years ago this week. It seemed a little harsh to grumble about

a division which occurred when Mr Heseltine was 13 years old, at a time when his hair was but a shadow of its later self.

But it did give him the opportunity to repeat the slogan of the day: that the Tories have promised to spend more on the NHS every year.

Mr Prescott said that the only way to safeguard the health service was "elect a Labour government". He threw in another slogan, "the people don't believe the Tories", then added: "All Tory promises should carry a government health warning."

Mr Heseltine barked back: "The British people know that Labour won't give the pledge the Conservatives have already given." Mr Prescott shouted at him from the bench a slogan which has yet to appear on a Labour poster: "You're getting too excited!"

Hezza made a mistake. He decided to take on the heckler. This is something a stand-up comedian can do, but probably not a stand-up Deputy Prime Minister.

"I am always excited by the honourable gentleman," Tories wriggled in pleasure, waiting for the punchline.

"The honourable gentleman is a very exciting person," he went on. The Press Gallery stirred in (slight) anticipation.

"Never has anyone been so wrong so often on so many subjects," he concluded, limply. As they say at our local comedy club, "Taxi!"

The last question came from Labour's home affairs spokesman Alun Michael, who wanted to know why the Government wasn't banning ads for vicious weapons such as the "Vindicator knife" and the "Rambo short sword". "Vindicator" does seem an odd name for such a savage weapon (complete with blood channel), since it generally appears in more restrained contexts, as in, "Recent events have tended to vindicate Prof Hobsbawm's theories..." Perhaps it is actually the "Rim-baud" sword.

Simon Hoggart and Steve Bell will be performing extracts from their new book, Live Briefs, at Books Etc, Covent Garden, London WC2, next Thursday November 14. Phone 0171 379 6947 for free tickets.



Richard Morley and Jay Khadka facing the media after yesterday's decision, which Mr Morley described as "terrible not just for me but for my family"

PHOTOGRAPH BY SEAN SMITH

'Debt of honour' son must go

Kamal Ahmed

THE NEPALESE man adopted by a British millionaire after a pact made in the Himalayas has lost his fight to stay in Britain.

Jay Khadka, aged 20, applied to the High Court in a last-ditch attempt to overturn a Home Office decision to deport him. Yesterday Mr Justice Laws rejected Mr Khadka's case, saying that the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, had acted as "a reasonable decision maker" in turning down Mr Khadka's plea for exceptional leave to remain in the country.

"Many may regard the result he [the Home Secretary] arrived at as harsh," Mr Justice Laws said. "But the [immigration] policy is a coherent one and its application is on reflection perfectly understandable."

"His decision was taken as the people's democratic representative; if I were to overturn it I would usurp that role, which it is no business of mine to do."

Home Office documents lodged with the court said that allowing Mr Khadka to stay would undermine gov-



'It is not a question of my wish to remain in Britain but my need to remain with those whom I love'

IT TOOK less than five minutes, writes Kamal Ahmed. At 10.30am Mr Justice Laws walked into court 66 at the high court in London and by 10.35am it was all over. Four simple words: "The application is dismissed."

Speaking yesterday after hours of non-stop media soundbites, Jay Khadka (left) rubbed his eyes, al-

most in disbelief at what had happened.

"For a while I just could not take it in," he said, pulling his camel-hair coat closer around him. "I have had butterflies in my stomach since first thing this morning but when I heard the decision it was if someone had opened a massive ventilation system through my whole body."

Mr Morley said he would contact the Home Office today to see how long Mr Khadka is allowed to stay in Britain. If he decides not to appeal it is likely to be 28 days.

The court had been told of the unusual circumstances of Mr Khadka's arrival and the close bond between him, Mr Morley and other members of the family community. Mr Morley had brought together at his home at Clearwell Castle in Gloucestershire.

Mr Morley, a millionaire who runs a computer busi-

ness, said that if Mr Khadka had to leave the country he would pay for the other seven members of the community, including himself, to go with him. "I think it is a very sad day for human rights in Britain," Mr Morley said. "Mr Howard has made a dreadful decision but essentially the judge accedes that Mr Howard is effectively able to make up his own mind on the matter and that the judiciary does not see its role as challenging Mr Howard's position."

Mr Morley said that he returned to Nepal in 1990 to find Mr Khadka after hearing

that Mr Khadka's father, Basu, had died. Mr Morley said he had a debt of honour to look after Mr Khadka should anything befall his father, a Nepalese policeman who had saved Mr Morley's life in 1984.

Basu walked more than 60 miles over three days to seek help for Mr Morley after finding him sick and exhausted during a Himalayan trek.

Mr Morley said he would meet the Nepalese prime minister, Sher Deuba, in London on Monday to discuss his family's possible move there.

"I think we have no option but to leave. The most important thing is that the family sticks together, property and possessions come a very distant second."

He said he would only change his mind if he was advised he had a strong legal case. "We will make a final decision over the next few days."

Immigration groups criticised the decision to deport Mr Khadka. "This is sad but utterly predictable," said Claude Moraes, director of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants. "Dozens of families are being divided by draconian immigration laws."

He said he was committed to living in Britain and there was nothing in Nepal for him, unless the family moved there as well.

"It is not a question of my wish to remain in Britain but my need to remain with those whom I love. They have their home in Britain."

Mr Khadka, heir to Richard Morley's fortune has been living in a community at Clearwell Castle with five men and two women.

He has made a "blood pact" with Mr Morley saying that he would never leave the family and would marry within it.

Review

Quiet madness of Tinder touch

Caroline Sullivan

Tindersticks

ADAM ANT once said "ridicule is nothing to be feared of", words "Tindersticks" must have taken to heart since so much about them begs inclusion in Pseudo's Corner. Just look at them on the second night of five at the ICA.

Lead mumber Stuart Staples is doing his best to look like a cross between Elvis Presley and Serge Gainsbourg, cardigan studiously slept in, greasy hair swept back. Then there's the french-sticks, who exchange my-sching-soul-glances while clinking guitars and xylophones. They do not want to be on stage: they want to be next door to Jim Morrison at Pere Lachaise, where their pale fans can mourn all that squandered beauty.

Still, nothing wrong with a few pretensions, which in this Nottingham group's case have produced three strange and beautiful albums since 1994. The first two, full of faintly heard non-rock instruments such as oboes, amount to more an atmosphere than a tangible sound. The third, soundtrack to

French film *Netette et Boni*, is similar, although it differs from the absence of Staples' faded whisper. They are so outside the rock norm they deserve their own category somewhere between ambient and cinema music. That thought must have inspired the ICA shows, each differently themed.

Wednesday night was a filmic and spoken word set, although "spoken word" was a bit gratuitous, as what Staples essentially does is speak to music anyway. Rather thrillingly, the morose mask slipped a bit on My Sister. Eyes closed, Staples was well into a melancholy recital: "I can see... uh... forgot..." Guitar, violin and xylophone dribbled to a stop as he struggled to remember the next line. "Wonderwall!" someone screamed helpfully.

It finally came to him, and he managed the only smile of the night. Staples admitted: "So many things to trip you up." What lingered afterwards was the quiet madness of both music and musicians. "Tindersticks" shades of grey may be as false as film noir, but while you are there you cannot help but feel it is real. This review appeared in *lacr* editions yesterday.

Jordan swindler lived off dead Britons' pensions

Embassy accountant netted at least £333,000 over 20 years

David Hencke

Westminster Correspondent

A CHARTERED accountant swindled the Foreign Office and Ministry of Defence out of at least £333,000 over 20 years by living off pensions paid to 35 dead expatriates.

The dead British diplomats and servicemen based in the Middle East had their pensions purloined by Elias Zureik, a 55-year-old Jordanian, while working at the British embassy in Amman.

His crime was not discovered until five years after he had quit his job when a

chance inquiry by the son of a dead pensioner alerted the Overseas Development Administration in East Kilbride that they had been paying the man's pension five years after his death.

Mr Zureik even transferred payments of five pensions belonging to people born between 1897 and 1903 to PO boxes in Amman when he quit his job so he could continue to receive the cash. "The coincidence of a relatively large number of very old pensioners in one location was not immediately noticeable," the ODA admitted in a report published today by the National Audit Office, Parli-

ment's financial watchdog. The fraud was only possible because Mr Zureik was responsible for paying the pensions and for producing annual declarations of entitlement, so he could forge the documents every year to continue claiming the money.

Jordan is unusual in not keeping a register of deaths, so the ministry in Scotland would not normally receive a death certificate when a pensioner died.

Many pensioners had their money sent direct to the embassy, from where it was easy for Mr Zureik to take the pensions. After he left, many pension payments that had not been diverted to PO boxes remained uncollected.

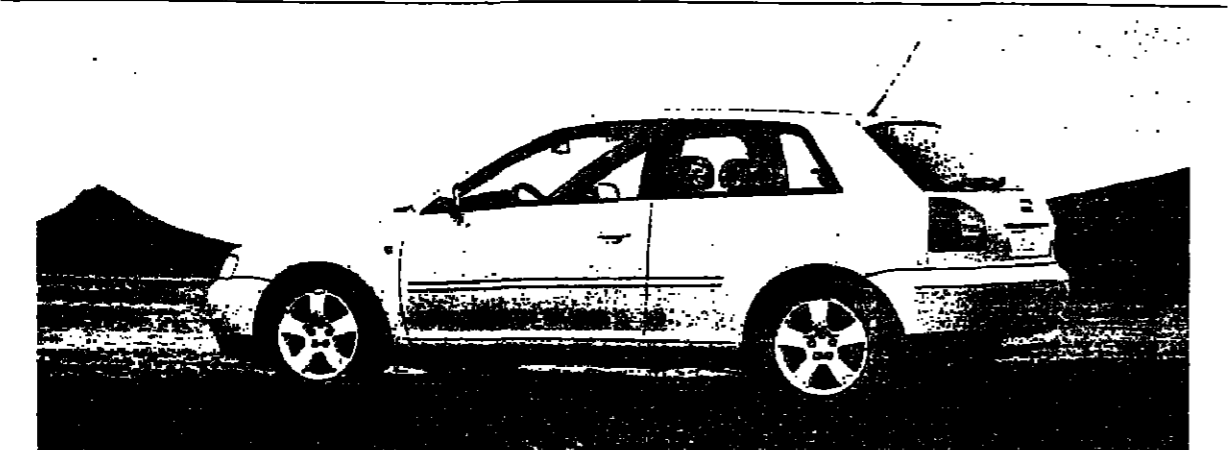
Sir John Bourn, the Comptroller and Auditor General, says in his report: "The (Overseas Development) Ad-

ministration and the embassy should have acted more quickly to establish the nature and extent of the irregularities; such action would have stemmed the flow of misappropriations and would have enabled remedial measures to be put in hand in

Amman, and elsewhere, sooner."

When challenged about the pension payments, Mr Zureik at first claimed the pensioners had all moved to the West Bank in Israel. He has since been arrested and charged with fraud and em-

bezzlement. An ODA spokesman said yesterday the case will be heard in full this year. The ODA is also bringing a civil case against Mr Zureik to return the money. New security procedures have been brought in at embassies handling expatriates' pensions.



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Men from poor families at heart risk

David Brindle

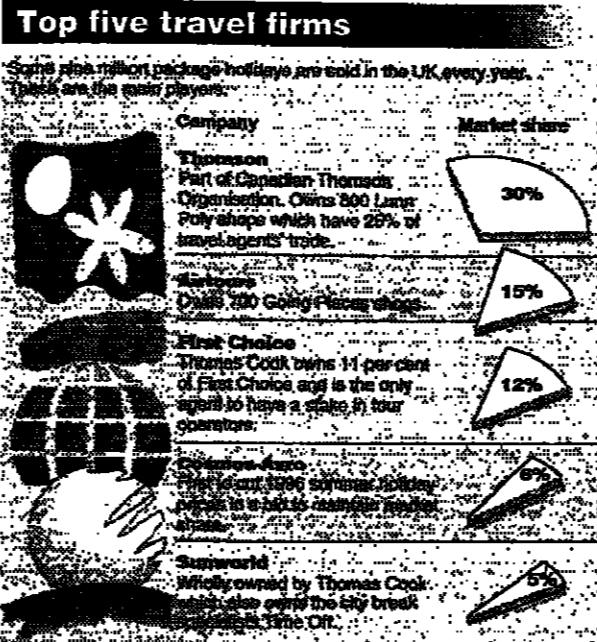
MEN whose fathers had manual jobs are almost a third more likely to have a heart condition than those from white-collar backgrounds, research today indicates.

The research, published in the *Lancet* medical journal, is based on almost 6,000 middle-aged men across Britain.

Men whose childhoods had been spent in households headed by manual workers were about 30 per cent more likely to have had a heart attack, or developed heart disease, than those whose fathers were non-manual. The study was carried out by the Royal Free medical school.

Advertisement for 'They think it's all over' video featuring a sumo wrestler and BBC logo.

Handwritten Arabic text at the bottom of the page.



Links to agencies 'distorting competition'

Big travel firms face 'raw deal' inquiry

Pauline Springett

BRITAIN'S travel industry, facing allegations that anti-competitive practices are giving holidaymakers a raw deal, is to be investigated by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, it was announced yesterday.

The Office of Fair Trading's director general, John Bridgeman, has asked the commission to investigate the ownership links between the larger tour operators and travel agency chains. The investigation will also look into the "widespread" practice of selling holidays with a discount — provided specific travel insurance is purchased.



Travel agencies linked to big tour operators are accused of removing smaller rivals' brochures from display

Sales talk

- Favourite travel agent sales techniques:
- Selling the tour operator's holiday as the 'best'
 - Making discounts conditional on buying the tour operator's travel insurance
 - Telling customers the only accommodation left in a given area is that run by the tour operator
 - Claiming the only flights left are those chartered by the tour operator
 - Failing to tell customers how far away their accommodation is from the resort centre

Mr Bridgeman said the big tour companies which also own travel agencies supplied a large proportion of Britain's £7 billion a year market for foreign package holidays. He believed they had the power to put smaller rivals at a disadvantage by removing their brochures from display, or threatening to do so in order to negotiate larger commissions.

"The two leading travel companies with whom I have had discussions have argued that such practices are a reflection of the competition that prevails in the travel trade. My view is that they distort competition," he said.

The decision caught the big travel operators by surprise. After the OFT said in July that it wanted an MMC inquiry, the two biggest opera-

tor operator, with about 28.5 per cent of the market, owns Lunn Poly, which has 300 shops. Airtours, which has a 20 per cent market stake, owns Going Places, and tour group Inspirations has commercial links with AT Mays travel agents.

Noel Josephides, a spokesman for the Association of Independent Travel Operators,

which represents 150 small companies who sell 1.6 million holidays between them, welcomed the investigation. "We've been at this for four years and it has been difficult to get heard. We are very pleased the Government has conceded there is a problem."

He said it was "morally wrong" that people were pressured into buying holiday insurance in order to secure discounts on package deals.

The big tour operators insisted the accusations were groundless, but welcomed the inquiry, saying it would set the record straight.

Paul Brett, chairman of Thomson Travel, said: "We are confident that the industry at large and Thomson in particular will be vindicated from any allegations of anti-competitive practice."

David Crossland, Airtours chairman, said he had been happy to go along with the OFT's requests, which had included an assurance not to take rival operators' brochures off display at peak times. But Airtours was not prepared to be the only company agreeing to such terms.

Yeltsin puts faith in diet of good news

President's upbeat prognosis fails to convince the sceptics

David Hearst in Moscow

HIS press secretary said he was sitting up, standing, pacing around, eating breakfast and wondering when he would be let out. The patient himself said in a statement that he was back at work and in control. But President Boris Yeltsin's doctors yesterday thought, on balance, it better that he spend another day in intensive care.

A day after coming off artificial ventilation, Mr Yeltsin announced that his quintuple heart bypass operation had been a success. In a message distributed by his press service, he said: "Dear Russians! I'm glad to announce that the operation was successful. I'm back to work again. As I promised, the situation in the country was under control."

To prove it, he signed a decree renaming Revolution Day. The most revered day in the Communist calendar will be a day of remembrance for the victims of Soviet repression.

As Communists took part in rallies across the former Soviet Union to mark the 79th anniversary of 1917's October Revolution, Mr Yeltsin, a former first secretary of Sverdlovsk, said the revolution had been a tragedy with millions of victims.

"We are one people. We have one fate, one future. And we are all coming from one past. It is time to close the book. We have one Russia, and we must be united," he said.

Meanwhile, Dr Michael DeBakey, the US heart bypass surgery pioneer who has been advising Mr Yeltsin's doctors, predicted that the president would be able to return to full political life. He said doctors found no evidence of scarring, which could have been caused by his three heart attacks, on the heart muscle, adding that it would be able to return to normal function.

Mr Yeltsin should even be able to over-indulge from

Taking it easy in the real world



time to time, he said, claiming the president's liver and kidneys did not look like those of a reputed heavy drinker. "Hopefully he'll moderate any excesses he may have had," Dr DeBakey said. "But I wouldn't expect an occasional experience of that kind to have an effect on his heart."

Other medical sources were less upbeat. They said Mr Yeltsin had problems with his cerebral arteries, with one source pointing out: "You can't bypass the brain."

They said he had been given stimulants to help him through his highly active presidential campaign. When he came off them in July, after his third heart attack, they had further damaged his health. The sources said his red blood cell level had fallen at one stage to 7 per cent.

The Communist leader, Gennady Zyuganov, said Russia was on the verge of a precipice. "There are two possibilities — either total chaos leading to the next dictatorship and bloody struggle, or labour must unite... to establish a normal life."

Chelsea rivals ready to pitch into power play

Lisa Buckingham and Pauline Springett

THE power struggle in the boardroom of Chelsea Football Club looks set to intensify following the abrupt resignation of Peter Middleton, former boss of the Lloyd's of London insurance market.

Mr Middleton — now the £1 million a year head of the European operations of US banking giant Salomon Brothers — resigned from the board of Chelsea Village, the parent company of the football club after an acrimonious showdown with chairman Ken Bates.

Neither man was last night available to comment but Mr Middleton is thought to want to protect the shareholding in Chelsea acquired for £20 million by his friend, Matthew Harding, the self-made millionaire who owned 35 per cent of the club who died in a helicopter crash last month.

Sources in the City claimed last night that dissident shareholders, seeking to oust

Chelsea rivals ready to pitch into power play

Mr Bates, could rally to Mr Middleton. The 65-year old chairman of Chelsea attempted to emascuate a threat to his authority posed by Mr Harding.

There has been speculation that City investors keen to buy a slice of top football action might be interested in shares in Chelsea now that the price of buying Manchester United has become too high.

Mr Middleton, a respected figure in the world of business and a keen football supporter — he supported Middlesbrough as a child — could become a focal point. He narrowly escaped being on the helicopter journey which killed Mr Harding. The one-time monk has vowed never to travel by helicopter again.

Despite the rumours, shares in Chelsea dropped 12p to 95p yesterday after Mr Middleton's departure, reducing Chelsea's stock market value to £130 million. Mr Middleton is the only senior independent director of Chelsea Village, which is trying to de-

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News in brief

Friends rescue young violinist

A YOUNG virtuoso violinist, rescued from a railway line by friends after celebrating his birthday, was last night recovering from burns caused by falling on a 750 volt line. His hands were said to be burned to the bone.

Three face drugs trial

THREE men accused of involvement in an alleged \$78 million cocaine supply ring, were committed for trial at Woolwich crown court, south east London, on December 2 when they appeared before Belmarsh magistrates yesterday.

Abbey's Christmas mystery

WHEN the monks of Downside Abbey in Dorset gathered to make a recording for a CD, a strange chacking could be heard in the background. Sound engineers came, uprooting benches in the splendid neo-Gothic abbey, but could shed no light.

Bosnia bravery awards

GRAPHIC evidence that the biggest threat facing British troops in Bosnia comes from mines is contained in bravery awards announced yesterday by the Ministry of Defence.

Mine 'caused quakes'

SCIENTISTS last night blamed Monktonhall Colliery for causing a series of earth tremors east of Edinburgh. Seismologists at the British Geological Survey have been monitoring ground movements in the Newcraighall, Musselburgh and Portobello areas of the city to trace the cause of 79 tremors.

Crisps recalled

WALKERS, the snack food company, yesterday ordered the recall of millions of packets of crisps amid fears that shards of glass may have fallen into some bags.

Justice minister attacked over Irish court fiasco

IRISH justice was compared to that of a banana republic yesterday when a prisoner facing terrorism charges had to be released and then re-arrested because they had appeared before a judge who was not told that he was no longer eligible to serve in the state's most sensitive court, writes David Sharrock.

US jail time allowed against sentence



Peter McMullen after being freed

Ex-Para who bombed barracks for IRA is set free

Owen Bowcott

A PARACHUTE regiment entering a barracks near Ripon, North Yorkshire, in March 1974. Judge Arthur Myerson, QC, told him at York crown court yesterday: "This was a bad case. It was carefully planned by you and it was dastardly executed."



Claro Barracks near Ripon after the bomb planted by McMullen. A woman was injured but soldiers were evacuated in time

deserted from the Palace Barracks in Belfast in January 1972, taking two firearms with him. He was recruited by the Provisional IRA and sent to Britain to set up IRA cells and select targets.

After the Claro bombing he was arrested for a firearms offence in the Irish Republic, convicted by the Central Criminal Court in Dublin and imprisoned until 1977. On release he refused to carry out a kidnapping in New York on behalf of the IRA and sought refuge in the US.

There he spent some time in jail fighting deportation but was freed after winning a court ruling that his crimes were political and he should not be extradited. Changes to extradition legislation led to him being re-arrested in 1988 and he eventually spent more than nine years in custody fighting the order.

A deal is understood to have been worked out, encouraging McMullen to waive his rights and return to Britain last March. The judge said that British government agencies had been in contact with McMullen and his representatives as to what he might expect on his return.

Justice minister attacked over Irish court fiasco

The justice minister, Nora Owen, was under pressure to resign as the latest embarrassment for the republic's judicial system unfolded in high farce.

It began early yesterday with the release from top security prisons of the men, among them the Briton jail escaper Nessian Quinlivan, five Northern Ireland men arrested across the border last month in possession of guns and explosives, three arrested at an alleged bomb factory, and two charged in connection with an IRA murder in June.

There was also a former senior member of Republican Sinn Fein charged in connection with a vehicle bomb near the Irish border last November and a self-styled leader of the Scottish National Liberation Army charged with having incendiary devices addressed to the Labour leader, Tony Blair, and the shadow Scottish secretary, George Robertson.

They were immediately re-arrested and brought under heavy guard to Dublin to appear in the Special Criminal Court. Later it was revealed that the last time each of the men had appeared in the same court it was before a judge who was not entitled to be there.

Judge Dominic Lynch had been "delisted" last August, the Irish parliament heard during an emergency debate. But he had never been told and continued to sit until last Tuesday. Mrs Owen said she had ordered an inquiry.

Lilley unmoved by court censure over 'illegitimate' suspension of benefit to disabled

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

PETER Lilley, Social Security Secretary, was wrong to be withholding benefit payments to thousands of disabled people while trying to get the

Welfare groups called on Mr Lilley to act on the ruling and lift the block on all payments. But a statement from the Department of Social Security indicated this was unlikely. It said: "We are considering the precise terms of the judgment and its possible

wider implications for the department, but we do have a responsibility to the taxpayer to ensure money is not paid out in cases where it transpires there is no right to benefit and little possibility of subsequent recovery."

The argument surrounds a two-year-old battle over the right of disabled people to benefits to enable them to take part in social, cultural and leisure activities.

last year that Rebecca Halliday, a deaf woman from Newark, Nottinghamshire, should get benefits beyond those "necessary to maintain life itself".

Officials 'not obliged to tell the truth'

Richard Norton-Taylor

CIVIL servants are under no obligation to tell Parliament the truth, the Government said yesterday.

Ministers order conscript army of dole workers

Sourmes Mine Labour Editor

THE Government yesterday unveiled a \$100 million nationwide plan to conscript 100,000 long-term dole claimants into compulsory work experience schemes in a decisive acceleration towards full-scale US-style workforce.

Universities urged to clamp down on 'degree inflation'

Donald MacLeod Education Correspondent

A STEEP rise in the proportion of students gaining top degrees has prompted the Higher Education Quality Council to call on universities to act together to clamp down on degree "inflation".

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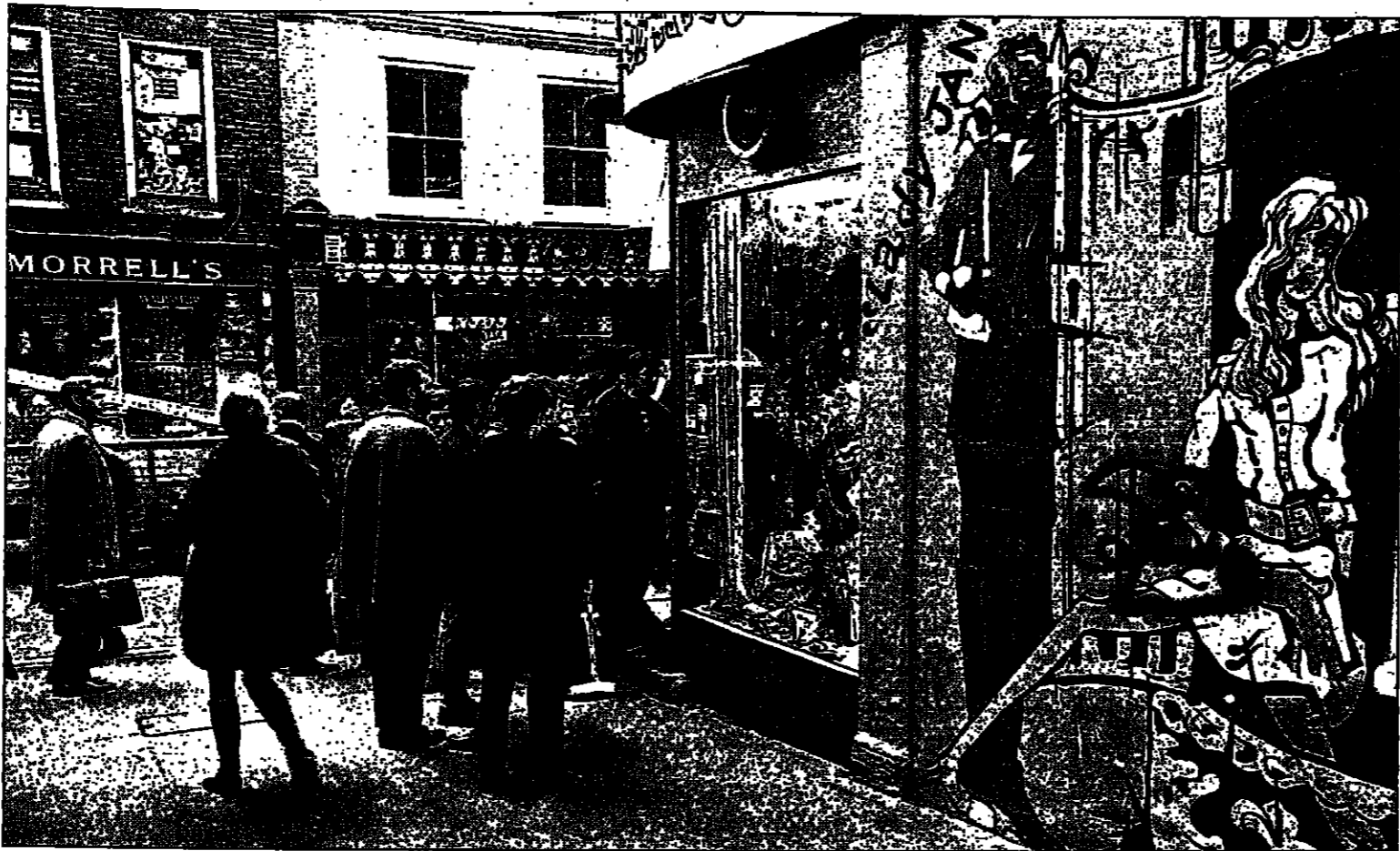
Handwritten Arabic text at the bottom of the page.

1990s

CLIENTS: German and Swedish tourists; afternoon strollers; touring schoolchildren; nostalgic budding swingers... SHOPS: Holland & Barratt; Boots; Body Shop; Whittards... AVERAGE PURCHASE: A box of English tea; camomile shampoo... CLOTHES: Denim jackets, leather mini-skirts, Doc Marten boots... CARS: There aren't any. Pedestrians only

1960s

CLIENTS: The Beatles; the Rolling Stones; Sonny and Cher; the Yardbirds; Frankie Vaughan; Cliff Richards; George Melly; Pete Townshend; others who were there but can no longer remember... SHOPS: Mary Quant; Lord John... AVERAGE PURCHASE: Pair of velvet corduroy trousers with 14in bell bottoms... CLOTHES: Regency jackets, crushed velvet flares; kaffans in upholstery fabric; seersucker; polyester trousers; shirts; sweaters and scarves; old Hussar tunics... CARS: Burgundy Cadillacs; white Rolls Royces; Lamborghinis



Carnaby Street in its heyday in the 1960s. Now a property company hopes to recreate a fashion mecca

'Bygone, faded' Carnaby Street gets another chance

LUKE HARDING... DICKENS once described it as a "bygone, faded, and tumble-down street". By the 60s it had come to symbolise the spirit of the 60s, and the revolutionary counter-culture of swinging London. But yesterday, Carnaby Street, once a fashion and music mecca but now little more than a dingy tourist ghetto, was sold to a property company for £90 million.

The Shaftesbury company bought the properties in the central London street from the Dutch company, Wereldhave, with a view to restoring the street to its former glory. Shaftesbury already owns large parts of the capital's historic Chinatown and Covent Garden. The 93 buildings on and around Carnaby Street house an eclectic mix of shops, studios and leisure attractions. In the 1960s the street was home to men's fashion boutiques in an era when acceptable dress included three-button mohair suits and candy-striped jackets. Regular customers of the shops, mostly run by the millionaire John Stephen, included such cultural icons as the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, the Kinks, the Who and Cliff Richard. One of the Kinks' most famous songs, Dedicated Follower of Fashion, was inspired by Carnaby Street. Nowadays just 18 of the 50 shops on the street sell clothes, while the modern tenants include shops which could be found on any suburban high street - Boots, Body Shop and Holland & Barratt. Brian Bickell, finance director of Shaftesbury, said the firm hoped to transform Carnaby Street back into a fashion mecca.

"We need to get young people back, which will take a year or two," he said. "Ideally, we would like to remove some of the high street names and replace them with young designers. We are looking at the 18 to 30 age range - people with high disposable incomes who want something special, something fashionable. London is increasingly recognised as the place to be for fashion retailers. Designers from abroad are desperate to move here. The vital statistics of the street are no longer the size of labels and the width of the bell-bottomed trousers, but the financial returns - £5.8 million a year rental income. Shaftesbury, which describes itself as a specialist investor in retail and tourist locations, already owns 120 shops and restaurants in central London.

'Blunders' led to jail bus hijack

Alan Travis Home Affairs Editor

THREE of the six dangerous prisoners still on the run after hijacking a coach this week had escaped from jail before - one of them three times, the Prison Service confirmed last night. The decision to use an ordinary commercial coach rather than a van with separate cells to move the inmates, five of them convicted robbers, was approved by Prison Service managers despite the men's history of escapes. The guards on the coach were not told of their security backgrounds. The disclosure of the full scale of the blunders involved in the mass escape shows it is the most serious since the Parkhurst, Isle of Wight, breakout in January last year. The Category B prisoners were being moved from Blundston prison in Suffolk on Tuesday after they carried out a revenge beating on another inmate which left him with such severe injuries he needed plastic surgery. According to a Prison Service source, it was "one of the worst assaults inside a prison in recent years", and is believed to have occurred after the victim failed to settle a drug debt with one of the six. The internal investigation is also expected to tell the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, that the prisoners were in control of the coach for an hour after slipping their handcuffs and beating the five guards while on the M25. After ordering the civilian driver to take them to Archway, north London, they tore up their prison records and threw them out of the windows and put on their own clothes which were also with them for their transfers to Pentonville and Wormwood Scrubs jails in London. They were last seen fleeing on foot on Tuesday night. The three inmates who had escaped before were: Lee Mitty, serving 11 years for robbery, who absconded from Litchfield prison, Cambridgeshire, in July 1993 and was on the run nearly two years; Warren Edwards, serving eight years for robbery, who had escaped three times before - in 1981, 1982 and 1985; and Gary Stages, serving 10 years for robbery, who escaped from police cells in 1983 while awaiting a court appearance and was on the run several months. Harry Fletcher, assistant general secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers, said last night it was extraordinary that prisoners, half of whom had escaped before, were put on a civilian bus for their transfer. "The public are at a serious risk as a consequence of these blunders," he said. The Prison Officers' Association also complained about the use of "unsecured vehicles", saying there had been a number of escapes from coaches. However, a Prison Service spokesman said it was usual to use coaches to transfer Category B prisoners, and cellular vans were reserved for the most serious inmates.

Watchdog under fire in MPs' media inquiry

Andrew Cull Media Correspondent

LORD Wakeham, chairman of the Press Complaints Commission, clashed angrily with MPs yesterday after he was criticised as a "eunuch doing the best in the circumstances". During ill-tempered exchanges, in which he denied that the commission was useless and a public relations facade, Lord Wakeham accused Gerald Kaufman, Labour chairman of the National Heritage committee, of being the most "offensive maker of remarks" at Westminster. The committee's inquiry into newspaper payments to witnesses in court cases broadened into a wide-ranging discussion of the effectiveness of press self-regulation. Lord Wakeham, a former Tory chief whip, repeatedly complained that MPs were straying from the point as they accused the commission of being toothless, with inadequate sanctions. At one point after Lord Wakeham conceded that the commission was voluntary, Mr Kaufman said: "You are telling us your body is completely useless, but statutory regulation is unattractive." Lord Wakeham replied: "I would very strongly urge the Government not to bring in statutory controls on the press which we have not had since the days of Magna Carta." Mr Kaufman intervened again, saying Lord Wakeham "sounds like a eunuch trying

to do the best in the circumstances". Lord Wakeham said: "I cannot think of a more offensive maker of remarks than you - but even you are not as good as you used to be. I know the chairman of the committee is a sensible, reasonable person, but he is doing his best to disguise it today. It is a pity he is not more civilised and polite."

Although Mr Kaufman said he was suitably chastened, Lord Wakeham said it did not look like it. Later Tim Renton, MP for Mid-Sussex and a former Tory minister, said: "Anyone involved in public service taking on the Press Complaints Commission is a very brave man. It is absolutely intolerable for Lord Wakeham to be referred to as a eunuch. It is the last thing a eunuch would do. It is a great pity the commission has become embroiled in this kind of emotional argument."

John Maxton, Labour MP for Glasgow Cathcart, said questioning had been offensive and unnecessary, but Sir John Gorst (Conservative, Hendon North) suggested the commission was "nothing better than a public relations facade" for newspapers. Last week the Lord Chancellor published a consultation document recommending that payments to witnesses should become a criminal offence, or a contempt of court. The issue arose after 19 witnesses in the Rosemary West murder trial signed contracts with the media. Lord Wakeham said the industry's code on payments had been tightened to toughen public interest justification for payments, which would have to be disclosed to prosecution and defence. He said the Lord Chancellor had cited just four cases raising concerns over 40 years, none involving miscarriages of justice. "The case for statutory controls is not made out."

BBC asked to reverse Armistice Day snub

John Ezard

THE BBC was asked yesterday to reverse an instruction in a confidential memo to its local radio stations to ignore a voluntary two-minute silence on Monday in honour of Britain's war dead. The memo - from Nigel Chapman, controller of English regional broadcasting - tells the stations not to cover events observing the silence at local cenotaphs. They should continue with normal programming. Executives are ordered to implement the policy but not to make copies of the memo. Angry station staff interpret this as meaning the corporation fears controversy. The voluntary homage, urged by the Royal British Legion, is due to be observed by hundreds of organisations across Britain, by BBC1 and Radio 2, and by nearly all commercial and TV radio channels. It has been supported by all three party leaders and by the Defence Minister, Michael Portillo. It is an attempt to re-establish the custom, replaced by Remembrance Sunday in the 1950s, of holding silences on exact anniversaries of the first world war armistice at 11am on November 11, 1918, in memory of the dead. Last year the BBC was showered with complaints for ignoring the occasion. Its outgoing chairman, Marmaduke Hussey, apologised. Yesterday the legion said it was disappointed and surprised by the memo. "We understood from discussions

with the BBC that it would leave local radio stations to decide for themselves. "The country has taken the two-minute silence to its heart, as we knew it would. We do not want to upset the BBC but we hope the policy will be reversed and station managers will be allowed to do as they think fit. However, the BBC made clear that it would stick to the policy. A spokesman cited a statement by Will Wyatt, chief executive of BBC Broadcasting, saying that, while the corporation should reflect any mood of public support, it should not "impose a silence on all our viewers and listeners". Radio stations should replace it with "appropriate" material such as interviews with veterans.

Reactions to the film vary. A group of Miami ladies, the landed rich who fled the country during the dark days of the Sandinista revolution, go into a huddle at the foot of the stage, all shoulder pads and painted nails. Ken Loach on tour in Nicaragua

Friday Review cover story

Dixons advertisement featuring various mobile phones and offers. Key offers include: 'UP TO 100 FREE BT MINUTES ON ALL TELEPHONES OVER £20', 'SAVE UP TO 33% ON TELEPHONES', 'SAVE UP TO £15 WITH THIS VOUCHER', 'SOUTHWESTERN BELL DISPLAY PHONE 100' for £24.99, 'Dixons Deal' for £19.99, and 'BETACOM PHOENIX PHONE' for £14.99. The ad also lists several Binatone models with their respective prices and features.

Germany's single-currency dilemma

Bundesbank caught in euro storm

Ian Traynor in Bonn

HELMUT SCHMIDT, former German chancellor and ardent European, launched a bitter attack on the Bundesbank yesterday, accusing the central bank chief, Hans Tietmeyer, of orchestrating a campaign to wreck the single European currency.

In a lengthy open letter published in Die Zeit weekly, Mr Schmidt accused the Bundesbank of holding the rest of Europe to ransom over the single currency and sowing international resentment of Germany.

"The Germany represented by you," he wrote, "seems greedy for power and too strong to many of our neighbours... Mr Tietmeyer, you have occasionally made polit-

ical and economic mistakes before.

"Since Maastricht the Bundesbank has pressed many of our European partners to follow its ideology... But the Bundesbank is not a state within a state... If you bring down the euro, you will curtail the [European] integration process."

Mr Schmidt's highly personal eruption followed developments on economic and monetary union in the past week which have set off alarm bells in the Bundesbank and elsewhere in Germany.

On Wednesday the European Commission predicted that 12 or 13 of the 15 European Union countries would pass the key single currency test next year, getting their budget deficits within 3 per cent of GDP.

The forecast was derided by economists as a triumph of

faith over fact, and to many observers it signalled that politics rather than economics was winning the single-currency battle.

"Of course, it's politics, not economics, that will determine the single currency," a Frankfurt banker said.

"If Kohl and Chirac are determined enough, it will happen. But the commission report is through rose-tinted spectacles, a wish-list for the best of all possible worlds."

The future European central bank, the European Monetary Institute — also reporting on Wednesday — was much more sceptical, saying that most EU countries were not on track for the sustainable convergence which is regarded as the *sine qua non* of a successful single currency.

Earlier in the week Brussels blessed a French govern-

Players in the numbers game

For entry to the European Monetary Union, the Maastricht treaty requires a budget deficit not exceeding 3 per cent of GDP. It also sets a maximum 6:10 ratio of state debt to GDP.

This week's European Commission report sees 12 or 13 of the 15 member states passing the 3 per cent test in 1997. Next year's economic data will

decide who is fit for the single currency in 1999. Deutsche Bank Research forecasts that only 7 will pass the test next year.

The European Monetary Institute in Frankfurt — the fledgling EU central bank — said most members were not progressing to "sustainable economic convergence" — meaning they are failing the test.

At the Bundesbank, jealous of its reputation as the guardian of fiscal probity, such manoeuvring raises hackles. It fears the systematic dilution of the single currency criteria. But German insistence

on a single currency "stability pact" to set tight budgetary conditions and punish fiscal miscreants after the single currency launch has become bogged down in negotiations. The pact was to have been finalised at an EU summit next month, but German officials now say there will be no agreement in time. They are threatening, with Bundesbank support, to abandon the negotiations if the terms are not tight enough.

The German business establishment is worried by the trend towards relaxing the criteria for the single currency.

"Currency union has to be a success, and that means depoliticising its implementation, especially in deciding who can join," the head of Commerzbank, Martin Kohlhagen, said this week.

The recent slight weakening of the mark, he said, was

good short-term news for the German economy, and based on the hope of a large currency union in 1999. "But it is an ill omen if it signals that a large currency union has slight chance of fulfilling its stability pledges."

In contrast, Mr Schmidt argued that over-insistence on stringency threatened to wreck the entire European project.

He likened Mr Tietmeyer's stewardship of the Bundesbank to the deflationary fiscal policies of its predecessor, the Reichsbank during the 1930s mass unemployment. Hitler came to power in 1933. German unemployment is now at its highest since those days.

The arguments over EMU and the clash between the political and economic cases illustrate the dilemma for Germany as the key power on the single-currency issue.

Economically, Germany has little to gain from EMU. It would be surrendering the continent's strongest and safest currency in return for the untried and the uncertain.

Politically, Mr Kohl has everything to gain. As the driving force behind European integration, he sees the single currency as a big step towards making the political project irreversible.

That had been the central foreign policy of all post-war German chancellors, Mr Schmidt argued. If EMU collapsed due to Bundesbank subversion, he went on, Germany would stand alone, surrounded by nervous and hostile neighbours.

Germans, although pro-EMU, are reluctant to give up the mark. They may even trust the Bundesbank more than they do the chancellor or Mr Schmidt.



Far left, 2,000 metal workers blow whistles in a protest in Berlin yesterday against proposals to cut their sick pay. Left, Chancellor Helmut Kohl (right) and the chairman of his FDP coalition partner, Wolfgang Gerhardt, share a joke during a debate on the annual tax law.

PHOTOGRAPHS: JAN BAUER/ROBERTO PFEIL

Jobs threat to Kohl goal

Ian Traynor in Bonn

GERMANY'S jobless total rose during the 4 million mark and last month rose up to four times faster than had been projected, compounding the acute budget problems of the finance minister, Theo Waigel.

As the Federal Labour Office in Nuremberg yesterday reported a seasonally adjusted increase of 41,000 unemployed last month, taking the figures to 3,887,000, the Social Democrat opposition accused Mr Waigel of stewarding the "greatest financial chaos ever" in Germany.

The 41,000 figure was three-to-four times higher than predicted by analysts.

Mr Waigel, meanwhile, announced a further DM 1 billion (£430,000) cut in pro-

vision for the unemployed as he struggled to plug what he described as a DM 3 billion budget deficit.

Despite a modest upturn in the economy, the decision confirmed expectations that Germany faces a period of increasing unemployment.

The government claims its present austerity drive includes supply-side measures to put Germans back to work, but the dole queues are lengthening and will continue to do so in the months ahead, particularly in east Germany, as the winter brings lay-offs for construction workers.

Munich's IFO institute for economic research predicted 4 million jobless next year — 10.4 per cent of the workforce. Similar projections were made by six leading economic think-tanks last week.

A survey of 25,000 German

companies this week showed them planning more lay-offs.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl said last spring, when he unveiled a package of spending cuts, that he hoped to halve unemployment by 2000 with a programme for "jobs and growth". He climbed down at his party congress last month, admitting he was too ambitious.

Mr Waigel, who is making cuts to meet the terms next year for the single European currency, signalled yesterday that savings would come from cutting funds earmarked for retraining the jobless.

But the spectre of growing mass unemployment threatens to undermine his budget calculations. If the jobless rate rises faster than projected, his revenue base will shrink and his outgoings rise, making it harder to meet the single-currency conditions.

French 'poised to invade Britain'

Le Figaro believes low costs are tempting firms to relocate. Alex Duval Smith in Paris reports

HUNDREDS of French companies could be tempted to relocate to Britain because of its low employers' costs and the lack of legislation on working conditions, according to Le Figaro.

With the main session of a Franco-British summit taking place in Bordeaux today, the rightwing daily newspaper issued a thinly-veiled ultimatum to the government: if it does not do more to help small businesses, they will depart to Europe's land of opportunity.

Britain, writes Le Figaro, has undergone a profound change in its 17 years under conservative governments. "The Thatcherite revolution has undeniably destroyed Britain's post-war welfare state," writes the paper.

The newspaper predicts that Britain — where 1,200 French companies already have bases — will grow stronger. Britain already secures more than 30 per cent of European foreign investment, ahead of France (18 per cent) and Germany (9 per cent), writes Le Figaro.

In a full-page article headlined, "These French firms which relocate across the Channel," the newspaper says Britain's low tax rate is a strong incen-

diver. "Employers' costs represent 10.2 per cent of salaries, as opposed to 40 to 45 per cent in France. Employers' contributions are less than 10 per cent of their salaries, against 20 to 25 per cent this side of the Channel.

"If company tax is comparable in both countries, British small businesses are entitled to a reduced rate of 24 per cent if their profits are below £300,000. In France, the reduced 19 per cent tax rate will apply from 1997 to small businesses which reinvest their profits in the company.

"Finally, the much vaunted flexibility of the British labour market is not a myth. In Great Britain, there is neither a minimum wage, a limit on working hours, nor statutory holidays. Short-term contracts can be renewed indefinitely," it writes.

The article was inspired by the recent move of a Paris businessman, Olivier Cadic, to Ashford, Kent. He claims that had his electronics company, Info-Elec, been based in Britain last

year, low tax and wage costs would have boosted profits to about £180,000 compared to £50,000 it made in France on a turnover of £2.1 million.

Mr Cadic, aged 34, told Le Figaro: "France as a society has made a choice. As long as tax pressure remains as choking as it is, jobs will go elsewhere and unemployment will continue to rise."

Mr Cadic, whose company employs 25 staff, is not leaving quietly. He has created a campaign group with a name of which General de Gaulle would be proud: "France Libre... Entrepreneurs".

He is advising French small businesses that wish to avoid bankruptcy to contact British agencies, such as the Invest in Britain Bureau (IBB), which facilitates foreign investment.

According to Le Figaro, IBB's 1,300 staff have helped "create or maintain" 285,000 jobs in Britain in the past three years. Its equivalent, the Invest in France Network, has helped "create or maintain" about 60,000 jobs.

Le Figaro concedes that

relocating to Britain has its disadvantages, especially in terms of the relationship between companies and their employees. "With only a minimum amount of protection, a British employee often feels no obligation towards his employer. Privately, a French businessman concedes that the quality of French labour is much higher," writes Le Figaro.

It adds that British productivity is 10 per cent lower than that of France, British staff are ill-trained and the country's transport infrastructure is overloaded and of poor quality.

Nevertheless, writes Le Figaro: "To those who accuse Britain of offering bad social cover and of causing impoverishment among the poor, only one thing can be said — an ill-paid job is better than no job."

There is scepticism in Britain about the claim that French companies are beginning to relocate in increasing numbers. A spokeswoman for the Confederation of British Industry expressed surprise at talk of a trend, but admitted "it's not something we monitor".

Martin Graham, chief executive of the Kent Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said: "There is not much of a trend; we keep hoping there will be. Kent has a massive amount to offer, like low labour costs and a foothold in the English-speaking world."

Greece treads water after missing single-currency wave

John Hooper, Southern Europe Correspondent

HOWEVER much the criteria for Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) are fudged, it is clear that Greece will not qualify for membership of the lead group. Acknowledged privately by government officials for some time, it has been conceded openly only in recent weeks.

The European Monetary Institute, the forerunner of the planned European central bank, will base its final recommendations on the performance of member states next year. But Yannis Papan-

drinou, the Greek finance minister, said he hoped to meet the Maastricht criteria a year later — in 1998 — "so that [Greece] can seek participation in the EMU on an equal basis in the following two years".

The paradox is that, although it may be the laggard of Europe, Greece has a government elected to office on a pledge of austerity.

The free-spending Socialist populism practised by the late Andreas Papandreu and his party, Pasok, in the Eighties, is the main reason why Greece's key economic indicators are so far out of line with the Maastricht criteria. As a result, the government now owes more than the country produces in a year; its inter-

est payments come to more than its combined spending on defence, education, health and social security.

The interest burden is the underlying reason why the government has the EU's biggest budget deficit — and the gap between income and outgoings means prices in Greece are still rising steeply.

But Mr Papandreu had begun to adopt stricter policies before his fatal illness, and his successor, Costas Simitis, has vowed to tighten up even further. After his re-election in September, he promised a war on tax evaders and a curb on tax breakers.

His first budget next month will show just how tough he is prepared to be.

But some economists believe fiscal stringency will not be enough, and that Pasok's close ties with the public sector trade unions preclude the programme of privatisation, which they say is necessary in order to cut the deficit and meet the demands of EMU.

That is not just a sticking point with the Socialists. A former government adviser, Professor George Bitros, of Athens University, tried unsuccessfully to get the right-wing Mitsotakis government to undertake a radical programme of asset sales.

"No party has accepted that this is the right medicine for the Greek economy," he said yesterday.

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Old guard qu... before the siege begin...

كلمة الجليل



Elizabeth Dole, seen as a highly polished politician's wife, may top the list of rising Republican stars in her own right

Sounding out a last post for a battle-weary veteran

Jonathan Freedland in Washington

OLD soldiers never die, they only fade away, but what happens when the old soldier is also an old dealmaker, insider and power politician?

Such is the dilemma of Bob Dole, the defeated Republican presidential candidate, as he ponders his future after nearly 50 years in politics.

With Washington wondering whether he will go quietly into retirement, hit the lecture circuit, or perhaps accept a job from President Clinton, interest is also intensifying on the next move of his highly polished wife, Elizabeth.

Mr Dole has spent the two days since his defeat just as he predicted in his concession speech on Tuesday night: without "anything to do".

Old guard quits before the siege begins

Martin Walker in Washington

PRESIDENT Bill Clinton postponed his planned departure for a post-election holiday in Hawaii last night as the business of reshuffling and refilling his cabinet proved more complex than he had expected.

At least five cabinet members have now told him that they do not want to serve a second term, three more are strongly rumoured to be leaving, and so are three of the senior White House political aides.

Erskine Bowles, who quit as deputy chief of White House staff for a banking career in North Carolina, was resigning yesterday to return and replace Leon Panetta, who is leaving to prepare a run for the governorship of California.

two: the former Senate leader George Mitchell, and the ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright.

Retired general Colin Powell and the former Senate foreign relations committee chairman Richard Lugar were the focus of intense speculation yesterday, together with the retired Democrat senators Sam Nunn and Bill Bradley, who have in the past been outspoken critics of Mr Clinton.

There was no sign yesterday that the president was backing away from his campaign promise to veto a second term for the United Nations secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali. The departed Mr Christopher had hoped to negotiate a compromise giving Mr Boutros-Ghali one more year, but the Republican majority in Congress would oppose any backsliding of that kind.

Token austerity steps as Bhutto is allowed to meet husband

First cracks show in hasty coup as new rulers exert authority

Suzanne Goldenberg in Islamabad

PAKISTAN'S new caretaker government has started to assert its authority amid signs that the constitutional coup that brought it to power earlier this week was over-hasty.

The new cabinet has promised to hold elections by February 3. But confusion threatens to unravel its declared plans to cleanse Pakistan of corruption and rescue its collapsing economy.

There have been four such constitutional coups in Pakistan since 1988, but this one lacks the precision of its predecessors. Yesterday, newspapers said President Farooq Leghari's sacking of the prime minister, Benazir Bhutto, was carried out in haste.

Commentators said Mr Leghari's rambling dissolution order betrayed signs that it was drafted in haste. "Suspicious are that something drastic happened which prompted the president to push the panic button," the Nation said.

The News said Mr Leghari was forced to act after he got wind of plans by Ms Bhutto's husband and the investment minister, Asif Ali Zardari, to become chairman of the upper house, or senate. The chairman's job is only a heartbeat away from the presidency.



Supporters of Nawaz Sharif, the opposition leader and Benazir Bhutto's arch-rival, celebrate her sacking in Lahore yesterday

to the people, than to serious trimming of government spending.

Irshad Haqqani, the information minister, said his cabinet colleagues had volunteered to cut their salaries by half and to give up some of the lavish perks that accompany high office in Pakistan.

He said the state would no longer pay for ministers receiving medical treatment abroad, and that private ministerial fleets would be cut back to a single car.

Ms Bhutto was allowed yesterday to visit her husband for the first time since her sacking. Mr Zardari, a symbol of the corruption which allegedly afflicted her government, is being held at a rest-house at Sihala police college, where Ms Bhutto was detained nearly 20 years ago.

Ms Bhutto arrived at the rest-house at about 2am, accompanied by her interior minister, General Naseerullah Babar. The half-dozen policemen guarding the gates, it was possible to see his plain-clothed interrogators chatting on the verandah.

Shah Mahmood Qureshi, a spokesman for Ms Bhutto, said Mr Zardari was being held under the maintenance of public order act, which provides for detention without charge for 30 days.

While the caretaker government prepares to file charges against him, Mr Qureshi said lawyers for the Pakistan People's Party would explore ways of winning release.

Angry businessmen have said that Mr Zardari, once known as Mr Ten Per Cent, had recently been asking for bribes of 30 per cent, forcing a change in nickname.

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Ms Smith off to Washington in crusade for gun control

Ian Katz in New York

AMONG the sweetest victories in Tuesday's United States elections was that of Carolyn McCarthy, a 52-year-old former nurse from Long Island who had never before stood in as much as a school-board election.

Her win in New York's fourth congressional district meant more than a seat in the House of Representatives: it was the culmination of a crusade that began three years ago when her husband was among the six passengers killed by a gunman on a Long Island commuter train.

When her Republican congressman, Dan Frisa, voted to repeal the ban on assault weapons she had fought to introduce, she vowed to unseat him and take her campaign to Washington.

To the delight of the Democrats, Ms McCarthy ran for the party, overturning a lifetime loyalty to the Republicans, who she claimed were in the pocket of the gun lobby.

Ms McCarthy has to learn a lot when she arrives in the capital. Until she decided to run, she had not heard of Dick Gephardt, the leader of the Democrats in the House.

EU passes the buck on Zaire even though ministers voice concern

Stephen Bates in Brussels and Chris McGreal in Congo

EUROPEAN Union ministers spent yesterday squabbling over the extent of help to resolve the conflict on Zaire's eastern border.

In the end, no decision was made on the scale of an aid effort for refugees caught in the conflict, or on whether European troops would ultimately be deployed. A final statement confined itself to offering deep concern and promising that the EU would play a full part in tackling the humanitarian crisis.

corridors for aid and safeguard humanitarian efforts... But most declined to offer troops for such an operation.

Ministers from France and Spain, which have promised to send up to 1,000 troops each for what they see as a 5,000-person force — angrily denounced other member states for failing to back them.

Other countries, including Germany and Belgium, which was once the colonial power in the region — and Britain supported calls from African governments for the deployment of a so-called neutral force. But all declined to offer military aid.

community's spinelessness." Britain's Baroness Chalker, the Overseas Aid Minister, retorted: "He ought to find out what the facts are, before he accuses people of things."

Spanish officials claimed the meeting had been almost a failure. They were scathing of the participants for discussing the political situation rather than the aid issue.

Instead Emma Bonino, the European Commission's humanitarian aid commissioner, and aid ministers from Ireland, the Netherlands and Italy, will visit the region at the weekend.

around Bukavu, aid officials said. "They say there are hundreds behind on the road," said Claude Olenga, the local administrator of the religious charity Caritas.

Near Goma yesterday, Zairian rebels and Rwandan Hutu extremists fought gun battles around what had been the largest refugee camp in the world near Goma, as the rebel troops extended their control over eastern Zaire.

Mortar and machine-gun fire was heard near Mugunga camp, about 10 miles northwest of Goma. Smoke billowed from burning shelters in what may have been a deliberate attempt to destroy the camp to prevent refugees moving back in.



Bob Dole is taking time to ponder his future and to catch up on sleep after his defeat in the presidential elections

News in brief

Doctors' protest closes hospitals

ZIMBABWE'S two biggest government hospitals were shut by a crippling strike by nurses and junior doctors yesterday for the second day running.

Japan's elders take helm

JAPAN'S prime minister, Ryutaro Hashimoto, launched his minority government yesterday, naming a cabinet of mainly party elders which included a 69-year-old finance minister.

Italy holds terror suspects

POLICE in Italy said they had arrested 17 people yesterday on suspicion of supplying arms and providing other support to Algeria's radical Armed Islamic Group (GIA).

Mayor's wife investigated

MAGISTRATES are investigating the wife of the Paris mayor, Jean Tiberi, in the latest corruption inquiry into the family, a judicial source said yesterday.

Cyclone toll rises

A FIERCE cyclone struck two coastal south-eastern Indian districts, killing at least 400 people and destroying 10,000 homes, the state's chief executive said yesterday. He said the death toll may reach 2,000.

Imelda loses sight of US

A MANILA court has rejected a petition by the former first lady Imelda Marcos to be allowed to travel to the United States for treatment for glaucoma, ruling that Filipino eye doctors are as competent as Americans.

Let's face it: musically, we are a naff nation. An island of permanent tack. A culture that burnishes efficient cabaret into passable pop. Pat Kane applauds Wallypop

Friday Review page 12

Friday November 8 1996
Edition Number 46,705
119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3EP
Fax No. 0171-837 4530
E-mail: letters@guardian.co.uk
Website: http://www.guardian.co.uk

The global spin doctor

It's OK: he's helping Blair, not working for him

WOULD LABOUR benefit from another spin doctor? George Stephanopoulos, the White House whiz kid who helped Bill Clinton win his second term, told our Washington correspondent this week that he would be happy to help Labour in its forthcoming election. It is an unprecedented offer of help from a senior member of the US administration to an overseas opposition party — and neat retaliation for the help the Tories gave George Bush during the last American election. But would it help?

There are some obvious dangers in importing a foreign star into a winning team. Ask Newcastle United who imported Aprilia, the Columbian football star, late last season. Far from clinching the championship, Newcastle went into steep decline. Foreign imports are not the best recipe for dressing-room harmony. Labour's spin doctors are already at war with each other. Do they really need to raise the tension by importing an American with a foreign name to hate? Surely the next election should be won on policies, not presentation?

The British media would be obsessed by Stephanopoulos, creating irritation within the camp and much distraction outside it. A backroom boy who gets more attention than elected representatives is never popular. No doubt many successful Labour moves would be unfairly attributed to the American adding to his internal unpopularity. Moreover, a man who does not understand the Labour Party's nuances and complex theology is bound to make mistakes as well as causing much injury to Old Labour, which already believes the Clintonisation of Labour has gone too far. Knowing the local culture is crucial in politics. Look at the mistake which Labour made with its Sheffield rally, modelled on similar successful rallies organised by Germany's SPD.

All that said, Labour would be foolish to spurn his offer of help. Labour will be unable to achieve anything unless it wins the next election. There are many lessons which can be drawn from American politics, without descending to the depths of its negative campaigning. The Tories have talked at length with their American allies on the latest techniques. One reason why political organisers look to America is that they have more elections than most people. Another, alas, is that much modern campaigning has become another arm of the advertising and PR industry, which America bestowed on the world. The forthcoming British election is likely to be even dirtier than the last. What better person could Labour have to advise it than a man who has twice lived through the toughest political game of all and come out on top? Labour has already adopted many of the techniques devised by the Democrats to survive the Republican assault, not least with its instant rebuttal unit which our diary editor has had such fun in teasing. But rebutting lies is crucial in any campaign.

Stephanopoulos's offer is another example of the global village. If skills are not transferable in the communication world, they cannot be transferred anywhere. Asprilla was an exception. Tommy Lawton is dead. Today's sportsfield sparkle with foreigners, not just on the soccer pitch (Cantona, Schmeichel, Ardiles, Klinsmann, Gullit) but on many other fields too. Of course, Labour should be cautious. Of course, it must be wary of the dangers of an outside consultant. But caution was already being exercised yesterday with the statement that Stephanopoulos would be helping, but not working for, the party. The Left may rightly worry about the American's skill in pinching the other side's issues. But Tony Blair has already learned that trick.

When the Treasury's axe falls

Why should we have to pay to visit the British Museum?

THE BRITISH MUSEUM not only contains some of the great treasures of the world, but is also a treasure in itself. Sir Robert Smirke's Greek Revival building was constructed in the 1750s to accommodate 100,000 visitors a year. It is now bursting with six million a year — more than any other museum of its kind including the Louvre (five million). Its trustees are proud that it has never charged anyone for admission. Like blood, Britain gives it away free. But not for much longer if the Government has its way. This year's grant was cut by 3 per cent with the expectation of further cuts in future on top of the £3 million a year rent it will cease to receive when its tenant, the British Library, decamps in 1998. By the end of the decade, the BM's funding shortfall could reach 20 per cent. The trustees are having to consider unpleasant options, including cuts in manpower of 20 per cent plus admission charges of up to £5. Does it matter?

Few would object if overseas visitors — particularly from countries like France which charge visitors through the nose for admission to their museums — had to pay while UK citizens, or at the very least local residents, were exempt. But that would require some sort of identity card which may only be possible at the local level. Some economists would argue that since the congestion happens at weekends — particularly Sundays — charges could be introduced then, leaving weekdays free. But that wouldn't rectify the finances.

No one doubts that the museum — like every other organisation in Britain — could be run with fewer staff, especially if more use was made of automated surveillance techniques. But that won't solve the financial problem either. In the end, it comes down to a straight choice between government funding or admission charges. When "voluntary" charges were introduced at the Victoria and Albert Museum admissions fell from 1.7 million to 1.3 million. Admissions at the Natural History Museum fell to 1.4 million from 2.5 million after the introduction of charges, though the museum authorities believe the figure of 2.5 million was grossly inflated because of a flawed system of counting people entering the museum when it was free.

The fact that a number of museums in Britain already levy charges makes it difficult to argue that the character of the British Museum will somehow be fatally undermined if it does the same. Of course, it won't. But that's not the point. Free admission to museums has been a defining national characteristic of Britain. The freedom to be able to browse in a museum or art gallery, even for half an hour, is a small but vibrant British freedom which isn't worth destroying just to raise a few millions towards tax cuts designed to win an election. The salami slicing that defines the Treasury's approach to public expenditure on the arts is also slicing off subtle freedoms that, once gone, will never return.

Boris Yeltsin declares harmony

If only other Russian problems could be dealt with so easily

A MIRACLE, or something close to it, has taken place at the Moscow Cardiological Centre. Boris Yeltsin did not allow the sun to rise for a second day before resuming the powers he had surrendered to the prime minister while he had his heart bypass operation. Recovery from an operation of this kind can be surprisingly swift, but this was beyond all expectations. Mr Yeltsin is said to be already back on his feet, and urging the doctors to return him to the general hospital which has become his presidential office.

The only people who can pronounce for sure on Mr Yeltsin's state of health are the surgeons and consultants who are able to examine him. They have expressed great confidence: for good measure, US heart surgeon Michael DeBakey has thrown in the news that Mr Yeltsin shows no signs of having been a heavy drinker. (Now that really is amazing). One can only hope they

have resisted pressure to be over-confident. Mr Yeltsin has been through a serious operation, after months when he clearly felt not at all well. It is good for him, and probably for Russia, that the outcome appears to be so satisfactory. The country could hardly afford another shock. But it may be going a bit far to announce, quite so soon, that the president is a New Man — even if not, as in the past, New Socialist Man.

There was an almost childlike aspect to Mr Yeltsin's first decree yesterday, which proclaimed that Revolution Day — for it was November 7 — would henceforth be known as the Day of Accord and Reconciliation, and that in future he would "not allow confrontation". On a day when hundreds of thousands of teachers, workers and soldiers went on strike because their wages have not been paid for months, it may prove easier to get the president back on his feet than Russia.



Letters to the Editor

The man the women voters fancy

RICHARD THOMAS did not let the facts get in the way of his thesis on Labour and women (Blair's bad hair day, November 7). He was aware — because our office told him — of the ample polling evidence that shows a solid argument that "female voters remain deeply suspicious of Blair", but chose to ignore it.

The truth is that the gender gap which existed at the last election has been largely closed. Whereas in 1992 the Conservatives had a nine-point lead amongst women, recent polls indicate that this has been converted into a Labour lead of around 27 points. A recent Mori poll showed that the gap between male and female support for Labour had virtually disappeared: 57 per cent of men supported Labour, compared to 54 per cent of women.

The gap which remains is explained by the over-55s age group, where Labour does less well generally, and which contains far more women than men. Interestingly, amongst the under-55s, more women than men support Labour. The Gallup 9000 showed recently that 58 per cent of men in this age group support Labour, compared to 61 per cent of women.

Thomas also chose to misrepresent the facts about the agency of Mr Blair's office. He states that Blair has no women "in his inner circle". In fact, a woman heads his private office, a woman is in charge of his relations with the party and trades unions,

and a woman is in charge of co-ordinating Labour's campaign and election plans at Millbank Tower. Alastair Campbell, Press Secretary to Tony Blair, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

YOU appear to forget that women's concerns are the same as men's. They care about financial security, standards in our schools, the rampant crime and disorder in our communities, job opportunities, and the treatment they and their families can expect from the NHS.

One need look no further than our initiatives of stalking, paedophiles and knives, our five key pledges on reducing hospital waiting lists, smaller class sizes, tackling youth crime, getting our young people back to work, and sound management of the economy to see why women are attracted to Labour. Janet Anderson MP, Shadow Minister for Women, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

GORDON Brown's office is not, as you claim, a "Boys' Own operation". The chief-of-staff is Sue Nye; the head researcher is Dr Sandy Hunt; her assistant is Cathy Koester; Gordon's agent is Helen Dowd; and his constituency office is run by Cllr Rhona White. Carole Bird, Correspondence Secretary, Office of Gordon Brown MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA.

RECENTLY sent a letter to Tony Blair about the issue of curfews for children. It was written in the first person but I said that my husband and my daughter also felt the same way. I signed the letter first and they signed under my name. The reply, when it came, was addressed to "Mr David Wilson". No mention of my daughter or myself.

I wrote back and pointed out how discourteous this was. To this letter, there came no reply at all. Similarly, the local-authority Labour candidate addressed her election communication to my husband only.

The message is quite clear: my daughter and I are invisible in the eyes of the Labour Party and Tony Blair's commitment to family values obviously involves re-arranging (on paper at least) such aberrant families as ours whose female members have equal status with father. This kind of treatment has more impact on me than Tony Blair's pretences or his visits to the hairdresser. Leslie Wilson, 33 Surley Row, Caversham, Reading RG4 8ND.

IN the same edition of the Guardian which reported on a gender gap in voting intentions, you carried a story showing that one household in six in Britain is living below the poverty line. In these households, women, at every stage of their lives, will be disproportionately affected by poverty, discrimination and

labour-market inequality. The notion that women are not interested in the "hard" issues of politics is simply an ironic example of the kind of sexist prejudice that is responsible for losing women's electoral loyalty. Anni Marjoram, Secretary, Labour Women's Action Committee, 12 Chatham Row, Bath, Avon.

LABOUR'S Road to the Manifesto poll, which could not have cost less than £250,000, was ignored by many Labour members and its outcome generated little press interest. Tony Blair's haircut — which got on to most of the front pages, generated countless column-inches of comment and cost only 50 quid — was, in comparison, a snip. There's no doubt which is better value. Simon McKeown, 10 Murdoch House, Moodus Street, London SE16 1BJ.

SURELY the answer to Mr Blair's hair problem is for him to grow a beard. John Leno, 91 Lansdowne Road, London N17.

Letters to the Editor may be faxed on 0171 837 4530 or sent by post to 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3EP, and by e-mail to letters@guardian.co.uk. Please include a full postal address and daytime telephone number. We may edit letters; shorter ones are more likely to appear.

University challenge

WHY did Oxford University's parliament decide not to give the university staff's playing field to a business-school foundation, effectively turning down £20 million for a world-class business school it could really do with (Letters, November 7)?

Because it had promised over 30 years ago to keep the space open in perpetuity; because ownership and control of the business school would reside with the foundation, rather than the university; because there were no concrete plans to provide alternative sports facilities for staff. Perhaps also because Wafic Said was British Aerospace's Saudi agent in maybe the biggest arms deal in history.

We will never know why. What we do know is that, for once in modern life, the influence of money and prestige has lost out to concerns over broken promises, academic freedom, green spaces and the arms trade. Ethics and the quality of life win over the power of mammon. Now there's a headline! (Cllr) Paul Ingram, (Green Party), Oxford City Council, Town Hall, Oxford OX1 1BX.

I WAS in Congregation when the proposed Mansfield Road site for Mr Said's foundation — but not the foundation itself — was turned down by 289 votes to 214. In approaching the event, I did not have to "run a gauntlet of protesters", as you reported; on the contrary, I encountered a mere handful of people who quietly and politely handed me leaflets. And, far from witnessing the "heated debate" and "1,000 excited dons", I attended an eminently civilised occasion before an alert and respectful audience.

The whole experience convinced me, if I needed it, that Oxford is worth backing. I hope that Mr Said will not withdraw his offer, but will instead trust the good sense of the 3,200 dons eligible to participate in the postal vote which is now likely. They will articulate Oxford opinion in a more considered and representative way than was possible in an afternoon's debate.

I would be very surprised if they failed to back a scheme which at least promises to bridge the unhealthy divide between business and the university. Brian Harrison, Professor of Modern British History and Fellow in Politics, Corpus Christi College, Oxford OX1 4JF.

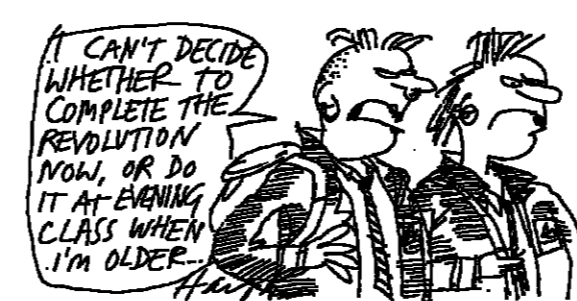
Danger zones

JEREMY Clarkson, of BBC's Top Gear, is reported as being married with a family and saying that he has "worked seven days a week for 10 years with nothing but owning a Ferrari as my goal" (Motoring, G2, November 7). Then he is surprised that people think he is a dickhead. I don't resent his Ferrari or care much if he drives it into a tree. The problem is that many other people living out his well-publicised fantasies drive their cars into us and our families. Greg Philo, Dept of Sociology, University of Glasgow, 61 Southpark Avenue, Glasgow G12 8LF.

WE wholeheartedly back the campaign for tougher fireworks legislation and are delighted that Jimmy Gray is considering tabling a Private Member's Bill to reintroduce import controls and other restrictions (Labour MP may back safer fireworks Bill, November 6).

However, we are concerned that Labour is failing to tackle areas that might offend the fireworks industry. Everyone running public displays or using fireworks in their garden should have a license. Only specialist, licensed retailers should sell fireworks, and for only a week before recognised celebrations such as Guy Fawkes's Night and Diwali. The public should be banned from obtaining the sort of fireworks used in organised public displays. Darren Sanders, Campaign Organiser, British Safety Council, Chancellors Road, London W6 9RS.

AS former treasurer of a Constituency Labour Party, I find you omitted the most interesting part of your story about its embezzling treasurer (Aspiring MP stole cash to support image, November 5). How on earth did it manage to raise £31,014 over four years? Margaret Squires, 30 East Scores, St Andrews, Fife KY16 9PT.



Hell, hope and Halifax

IT will suit the comfortable classes to dismiss the Ridings School crisis as solely an education issue brought about by inadequate teaching staff. The underlying issues of social and economic failure would be far too difficult to contemplate.

I recently returned to London after living in Halifax for three years. The shopping centre is a litany of inferior-quality goods which would disgrace some Eastern European towns. Many local people were ill-clad and aged beyond their years. The JobCentre offered jobs at £3 an hour or less, and the local paper had an astonishing weekly list of young

men convicted of violence and public-order offences.

Halifax is, however, deeply conservative in its culture and social values. Derived from philanthropic mill-owners with grateful workers who knew their place, it is no surprise that the selective education system should have survived more progressive egalitarian times, and been extended by the Thatcher era.

We should say good 'em to the children, who are giving the underclass the only meaningful voice which our society might heed. G Massey, 79 Curzon Avenue, Stanmore, Middx.

Thank you but no, Mr President

IT IS absurd for Philip Gould to argue that Bill Clinton's victory represents a triumph for progressive politics and a new-left consensus in America (Times of glory, November 6). Clinton's White House has been a disaster for the "many" who put him there in 1992 (not to mention the "many" who don't see the point of voting). Clinton drank freely from their hopes and delivered almost nothing but betrayal.

The "tough love" Philip Gould astoundingly announces we can expect from New Labour. Gould tells us that in 1996 Clinton abandoned the "fight for the middle classes against the excesses of the rich". But he still wants us to rejoice. What can he be — or Tony Blair — mean? Vania Del Borgo, 6 Park Square Mews, London NW1.

AMERICANS, in voting for Clinton, have returned a Democrat who will defend their entitlement programmes from the potential onslaught of the right in Congress. Ignoring the long-term demographic threat posed by the retiring baby-boomers in 10 to 15 years' time who will make extraordinary demands on Medicare and social security.

On the other hand, in voting for a Republican Congress, the middle class can rest assured that there will be little possibility that their taxes will be raised, which could perhaps have led to some resolution of the potential budgetary disaster waiting to be addressed. Richard de Zooya, Senior Lecturer in Politics, South Bank University, 220 Walworth Road, London SE1 6ST.

Spent force

JAN Aitken (Comment page, November 6) thinks public confidence in the political process could be improved by introducing limits on how much a political party can spend nationally, similar to the existing limits which apply to constituency spending.

There is a major flaw. Constituency spending limits are neither rigorously enforced nor particularly effective. Competent party officials can, and do, spend far more than the limits allow. With some inventive accounting the national limits are easily avoided. This is regularly done by all parties. The only people who have their constituency spending limited in practice are the naïve, the incompetent or the undesirably honest. Mark Pack, 58 Cardigan Road, London E3 5ET.

A Country Diary

GLoucestershire: Young Herbert, the Herdwick ram lamb we purchased in September from the Cotswold Farm Park, where, so we were advised, he was the best of the year's ram lambs, is proving a little slow to address the task in hand. We put him in with the flock immediately, for there is a theory that the presence of the ram brings the ewes into season a little earlier than they normally be the case. The traditional date for the introduction of the ram being Guy Fawkes's Day. So, Master Herbert has had six weeks to size up the challenge ahead. He has somewhat less aggression than you might reasonably expect from even a young ram. Adult rams can be both aggressive and positively dangerous at this time of year and will assert themselves at the rations trough or hay-baler by barging through the ewes to gobble up the lion's share. Herbert meekly takes his place at the trough and has yet to use his horns or bodyweight to push the ewes aside. Nevertheless, on Saturday he was to be seen wooling the first of the ewes to come into season, despite constant drizzle. And, just like last year, it was Hermione who was first to attract the attentions of the ram. She proved to be a good mother to her single ewe lamb this year so we will hope that Herbert has done the necessary with her and confidence boosted by the encounter, can now move on to impregnate the rest of the flock. Despite earlier resolve, we have not fitted the leather harness and saddle wax on him, so precise lambing dates will again be guesswork from the end of next March onwards. A minor outbreak of orf, the skin disease which can pass from sheep to humans, is troubling two of this year's ewe lambs. We have had a dose of orf along with the flock in earlier stages of the year, like August. This late outbreak, treated with formaldehyde spray, must be a function of the unusually mild climate for November. COLIN LOCKHURST

سكان العراق

Diary Dan Atkinson

LADY Olga Maitland brought a special understanding on Wednesday night to the future over the Gravesend Grammar School teachers who jollied off to France for a day's sightseeing...

MEANWHILE, her colleagues Malcolm Rifkind should be aware of the downside of any snappish outburst he will be entitled to wear as honorary colonel of 162 Movement Control Regiment...

NEVER one for uniformity, flamboyant sleuth Jason King would seem to be turning his crusading zeal against the mistreatment of disabled people...

THREATS of Closure is a dark, bitter poem published in the latest edition of Arts Management Weekly. Author Ian McMillan savages "the people in suits who like to keep things in order"...

ELSEWHERE in theatre, fun-loving dramatist Samuel Smiles' Beckett features in the latest edition of London Review of Books. Six volumes of Beckett are reviewed in a monster piece in n'ya pas de Beckett...



Looking forward to yesterday

Commentary Peter Preston

HOW OLD Bob Dole? Old Bob Dole all washed up: how you? Age mattered in the defeat of the week. Age matters, too, as the party analysts begin to tap out their American lessons for British electoral consumption...

with the Truman plans that helped him and other GIs back to civilian life. The Republican convention, at root, said it all. They endorsed a platform manifesto called Restoring The American Dream...

continue to write about the inside of the DC beltway as something antipathetic to the greater America: but they see it only as central politics versus devolved state politics. In short, more politics of one sort or another. The MTV poll isn't the first to tug at that rug...

convention floor. John Major in shirtsleeves promptly moved to become one of Smiler's People for Bournemouth. Variations on a media gimmick. These are techniques for import. They posit a campaigning parallel between the US and the UK...

MEANWHILE, Tony Blair, who used to talk about a Young Country, has vaguely positioned himself and his party on the nether side of 40. His moral horizons (which so get up Mr Major's nose) are redolent of pulpits 20 years ago...

bad-tempered reworkings of a Britain culled from legend or convenient history books. The past is our comfort blanket. Take one palpable reference point from the week. The BBC is 60. Auntie, for some unfathomable reason, celebrates expansively. (Fifty and 75, perhaps. But 60?) That celebration arrives as a long, warm bath of nostalgic sentimentality...

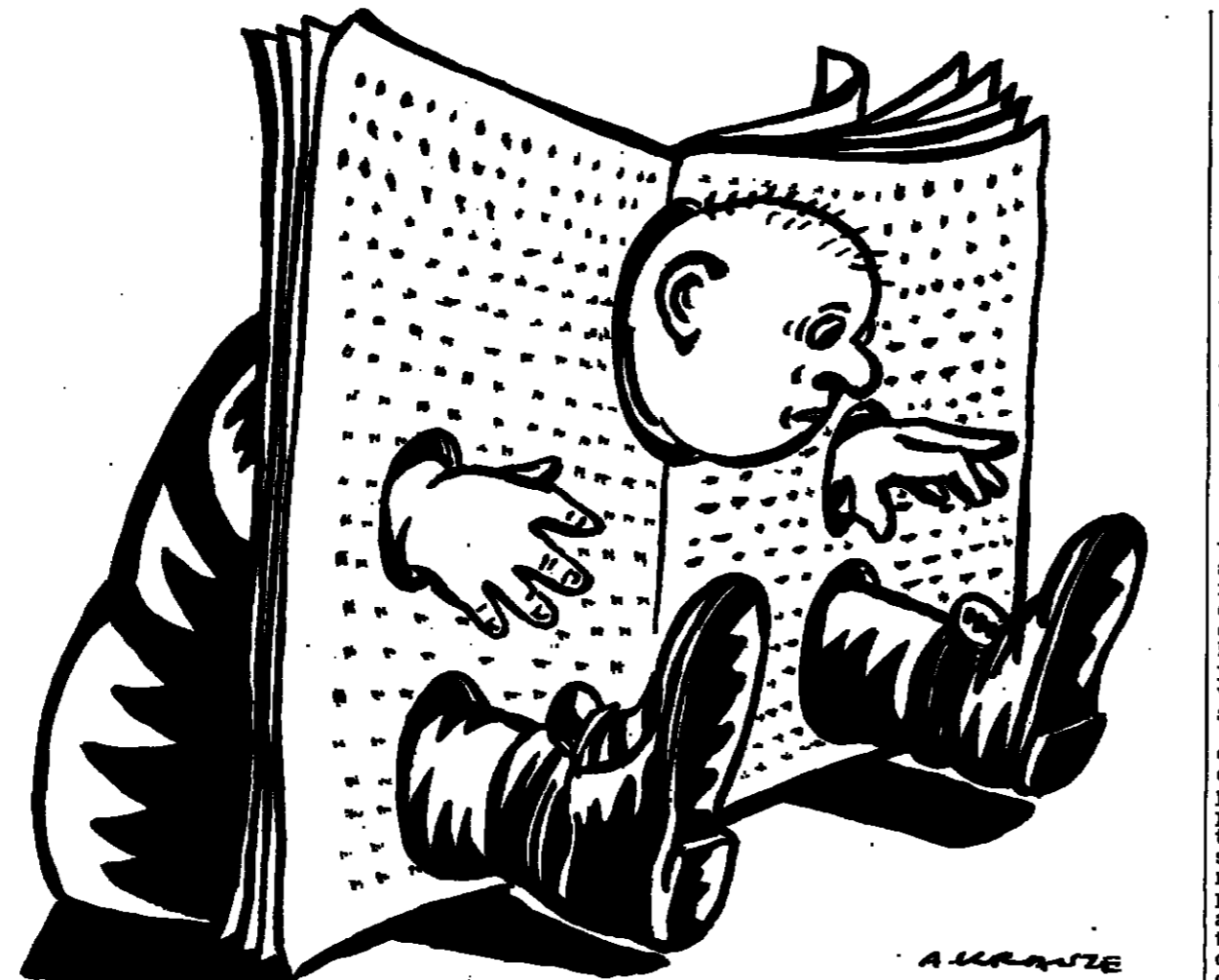
My poor bloody mother - how could she?



Bel Littlejohn

"I've brought you some flowers for your deathbed, Mama." I said last week, my voice choking with raw and unfettered emotion. "Take them, Mama. I mean forward to grab her gnarled old hand, the hand which, when I was aged just five-and-a-half, had denied me that second bowl of cornflakes just because I was - and the words echo like an unstoppable howl down the years...

It was ever thus. One of my earliest memories - described in my memoir in clipped, raw sentences, adding up to a portrait of life in nappies that is at once plangent, poignant and pungent, overflowing with deep-seated feelings - is of my mother forbidding me, in that heartless way she never quite shed, to break a cut-glass in my brother's face. That was it. She was always more interested in possessions - her home and its contents - than in her daughter. Later on, in my deeply miserable school days in an unforgivably luxurious private day-school (but a day-school that would have been a boarding-school, emotionally stultifying and soulless, had they run to the necessary dormitory facilities), many was the time I came back with a lovely new poem in my hands, which my mother, for all her railing, would then refuse to have set to music and performed in the town hall by a 50-strong choir and full orchestra...



Guilty parties

To be a 'naughty' child today can mean national media exposure. Is this really in the public interest? Education Editor John Carvel urges a debate to fix the new rules

THE FACE of the expelled 15-year-old staring out from the front page of yesterday's Express was a perfect image of surly defiance. The two fingers he thrust forward in a V-sign to the camera seemed to sum up the problems of insurrection faced by the authorities at the Ridings School in Halifax. We were told he had been excluded for allegedly abusing a teacher and throwing an exploding firework at a woman member of staff - a charge he denies. As usual, the picture told more than 1,000 words, but it was set off vividly by the headline: Defiant Face of a Class. Yeh, it was good spunky tabloid journalism...

display which blackens his reputation and may blight his prospects? This is not a charge of tabloid excess, fired from the sanctimonious luxury of a broadsheet paper. If the naming of errant youngsters is wrong, the Guardian has also made mistakes - and so have our competitors in the so-called upmarket newspapers and television news stations. In a front-page lead on October 29, we reported the closure of the Manton Junior School in Workson, Nottinghamshire, next to a large colour picture of the (named) 10-year-old at the centre of its disciplinary dispute. The boy had been in the news for weeks and further publication of his name and photograph can plausibly have done no extra harm to him. But we were going along with a questionable practice which has become rife since school discipline became a hot topic...

little ethical guidance. We need more. The issue was debated a few days ago at a private session of child education officers and local education authority chairmen at a conference in Salford. A common view was that there should be a total ban on the reporting of named children. To a working journalist this does not seem satisfactory. On a matter of important educational practice, are we to hear only from teachers, politicians and officials, but not from the pupils the system exists to serve? Can readers (or editors) trust quotes from anonymous children?

CLEARLY an outcome which allows "offending children" to be named would be unsatisfactory. Nor would it be necessary. The reliable guardians of their children's reputations. In several of the recent cases they have been happy to bring the youngsters forward into public view to help them win a point against the school. This casts doubt on the few ethical guidelines which do exist in this area. A code of practice produced by the newspaper industry, and ratified by the Press Complaints Commission, says: "Journalists should not normally interview or photograph children under the age of 16 on subjects involving the personal welfare of the child in the absence of or without the consent of a parent or other adult who is responsible for the children... Children should not be approached or photographed at school without the permission of the school authorities..."

RISEING DAMP? TACKLE IT WITH WALLGUARD

Advertisement for Wallguard ceramic tube system of damp proofing. Includes text: 'The Wallguard ceramic tube system of damp proofing has been in use in ancient and famous buildings for many years. A prime example is Westminster Abbey in which the system was first fitted in 1932 - and was recently added to by Wallguard.' Features a list of benefits and contact information.

Keep our leaders in check

ANOTHER MANIFESTO

A MONTH ago we launched Another Manifesto, a readers' free-access zone designed to inject fresh ideas into the stagnant political debate. Since then we have received hundreds of constructive proposals on topics as varied as tax and traffic, childcare and campaign approaches, a panel will judge which of your ideas most deserve to be taken up by our political leaders. Many of you have suggested more creative ways of making politics itself more representative. Sheila Kotak of Bristol rejects Tony Blair's cautious plans for reforming the House of Lords, proposing instead that three-quarters of its members be elected on the "party list" system, and the other 25 per cent drawn at random from the jury list. They would each serve for a month or two, and would listen to the arguments for and against bills; but unlike juries, they would be given the chance to speak briefly on the subject. At a time when the three main parties have moved closer together, Sheila Kotak writes, "leaving many people feeling unrepresented, it would increase democracy and a sense of belonging." The idea is supported by Nigel Trow, of Gwent, who sees one House nominated from the electoral roll as providing "more genuine representation of the people than occurs at present". John Thomsson, of Stonehenge, Wiltshire, proposes that Thursday voting gives way to Sunday voting, with booths set up at supermarkets and leisure centres. Candidates would stand for two chambers: a 500-member Commons, which would become the "English Parliament"; and a new 200-member "Chamber of Deputies", to scrutinise laws from Europe and from the English Parliament, and to coordinate legislation for Scotland and Wales. Voting would be electronic, immediately available on the Internet. Adrian King, of Rotherham, has a vision of politics beyond mere parties. Each parliamentary candidate (who would face no cost) would state his or her main policy objectives on the voting form, with a full manifesto available at libraries. "Over time, government would become more fluid, with political parties and allegiances becoming less important than the issues of the day," he says. That does not go nearly far enough for David Marcor of Gloucester, who wants to abolish the profession of politics altogether. Professional politicians are in the business for the money, for the chance of preferment and, if they have anything to do with it, for life. First, to deter carping, all candidates must have lived in the constituency for at least five years. Second, the electorate must be allowed to choose both party and candidate, either by primary election or voting on a party list. Third, MPs may not serve more than two terms (ever), which means fixed-term parliaments. And fourth, please read more brief ones, with your name and address, to: Another Manifesto, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER (fax 0171 837 4530; e-mail manifesto@guardian.co.uk). Further proposals will appear on tomorrow's letters page.

government must implement some reforms, but the party has not struggled to get its hands back on the controls only to cut the wires. These reforms, therefore, have no chance of being implemented. Finally, I thought from Robert Mowat of Teutoburg, Kent. MPs tend to plan no further than the next election. But what of the next generations? Simple: we need a Long-Thinking Tank. "I have a grandchild and she will no doubt have children who create a happy life. Would that politicians could exercise the same talent as animals that fumble through a happily ignorant state to provide for their successors..." Thank you for all your proposals. Please send more brief ones, with your name and address, to: Another Manifesto, The Guardian, 119 Farringdon Road, London EC1R 3ER (fax 0171 837 4530; e-mail manifesto@guardian.co.uk). Further proposals will appear on tomorrow's letters page.

Hans Kosterlitz

Advances of an open mind

DR HANS KOSTERLITZ, who has died aged 83, was a biochemist and experimental physiologist of world stature...

function. In the United States this argument was also put forward by Solomon Snyder and thus the discovery can be said to have "been in the air" and come to minds that were sensitised, as well as open and technically prepared.



Kosterlitz was in his seventies when he discovered enkephalins; they may prove invaluable in our ageing society

prove invaluable, especially in our increasingly ageing society. It seems fitting that Kosterlitz was in his mid-seventies when he made the most important discoveries of his life.

where his father practised medicine, the young Kosterlitz was at first persuaded to take up law rather than medicine or science.

physiological chemistry, split his time between Heidelberg, Freiburg and Berlin, and spent a highly demanding year of biochemical research under the great Michaelis at Roma.

pointed visiting Professor in Pharmacology. He lectured widely in Europe and North America and won an array of awards, including the Royal Society Royal Medal, the Facchetti Award of the US National Institute on Drug Abuse and, in 1978, the Albert Lasker Prize in Medicine.

Arthur Lucas

Restoring the gallery's glory

ARTHUR LUCAS, who has died aged 80, was the National Gallery's first chief restorer. He was instrumental in the gallery's development as a modern institution, and saw great changes in curatorship, conservation, science, museum climatology and acquisition policy.

subject was bedevilled by obscure traditional practices, not unlike medicine in the 17th century. The gallery itself was little more than a bombed-out shell and Lucas's earliest restoration work was done in a corner of the new director Philip Hendy's office, usually under the supervision of Helmut Ruhemann, the only permanent member of the conservation staff.

climate control tackled. Hendy was determined to acquire great paintings and to stem the flood of exports. It was against this background that Lucas established himself as the most respected member of the conservation staff.

the Association of British Picture Restorers and the Institute of Professional Civil Servants. He also did voluntary work for the Council for the Care of Churches.



Arthur Lucas... keeping art in good condition

Ivan Waller

Mountains of heaven

Ivan Waller, who has died aged 83, was not only one of the best climbers but an all-round mountaineer who kept up his enthusiasms for more than 60 years.

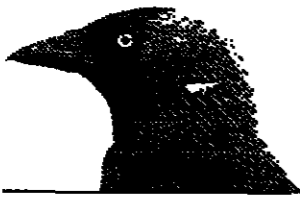
Mountains for him were his whole life. In a profile for a climbing magazine I wrote: "Ivan Waller lives for mountains every day - and probably dreams about them. At 70 he is still the complete, single-minded mountaineer, planning what to do next. I hope there will be mountains in heaven for him - preferably snow mountains, just right for crampons and the sun gliding the cornice."

sciences at Trinity College, Cambridge. He became an engineer working for many years in the experimental department of Rolls Royce and then with aero engines and later still, with tanks, travelling to the US to demonstrate and maintain Cromwells. All his life he loved tinkering about with engines and, even in his seventies, he preferred his motorbike to his motorcar.

In rock climbing, Waller had been involved in the first ascent of many severe routes, notably in North Wales, while in the Lake District he seconded Colin Kirkus, at that time this country's outstanding climber, on the first ascent of the redoubtable Micklesore Grottoes, in the East Bay of Galloway, in 1930.

or a tent, an excellent rascotter and, until his last days he could cope with a pint of beer in one hand and a double whisky in the other. Asked once about the particular attraction of mountains he said: "Because they give me a jolly good thirst."

Jackdaw



him to an old burned-out warehouse. "Oh no," I said, "Disneyland burned down." He cried and cried, but I think that deep down he thought it was a pretty good joke.

If you ever catch on fire, try to avoid seeing yourself in the mirror, because I bet that's what REALLY throws you into a panic.

Electric Shade RESEARCHERS at Vrije University in the Netherlands have developed a light-blocking window film that can be adjusted by turning a switch.

a mouse fails to operate or should perform erratically, it may need a ball replacement. Because of the delicate nature of this procedure, replacement of mouse balls should only be attempted by properly trained personnel.

thousands of worker-years of research and millions of dollars in funding. This is particularly true for high-technology organisations where talent is scarce and expensive.

Denis Owen

Tales from the swamp

DENIS OWEN, who has died aged 68, had an intimate knowledge of the worlds of early natural historians and ecologists and was himself a much travelled natural historian and ecologist.



Owen... popularises

opposite climatic extreme, working in Arctic ecosystems. In 1973 he became principal lecturer at Oxford Polytechnic - now Oxford Brookes University - and remained there until his retirement last Easter which was marked by an honorary doctorate. While in Oxford he took visiting professorships at several US and European institutions and collaborated with American, African and European academics on many publications.

Tim O'Shane

Denis Frank Owen, natural historian; born April 4, 1931; died October 3, 1996

Letter

David A Gilling: I fear that the Guardian may have made an ass of itself in its obituary of Marcel Carné (November 1).

Death Notices

BUCK, Naomi, suddenly on 30 November. Deeply loved mother of Tania. Moved daughter of Annette and Stuart of London. The funeral service will be held at St Pauls, The Actors Church, Great Court, London SW1, on Friday, November 8, 11am. No flowers. Donations in kind to charity, please see family for details.

Birthdays

Rupert Allason, Conservator, five MP, thriller writer (as Nigel West), 45; Stéphane Audran, film actress, 64; Prof Christian Barnard, heart transplant pioneer, 74; Alain Delon, actor, 61; Ken Dodd, comedian, 68; Paul Foot, campaigning journalist, 69; Frederick Gore, painter, 83; Prof Sir Edmund Happold, structural engineer, 66; Nerys Hughes, actress, 55; Razzzo Ishiguro, author, 42; Rickie Lee Jones, singer, 42; Sir Denis Mahon, art historian, 86; Tadaaki Otake, conductor, 47; Rifat Ozbek, fashion designer, 43; Iain Sprouat, MP, sports minister, 66; Tim Treadwell, theatre director, 49; Tamara Vasary, conductor and pianist, 63.

In Memoriam

WINTERLEY, Gerald, November 6th 1918. Family and friends are invited to a memorial service to be held at 11.30am on Friday, November 8th at the Crematorium, North London, Uxbridge Road. The service will be together with the wife and 10 children and 30 grandchildren.

Births

ALDERMAN MARGARET ANDERSON, 2nd Lt. North Carolina, USA, to Nigel and Lisa, born 10th October 1996. Weighs in at 11lb 10oz. 11th October 1996. Tel: 0171 715 4128.

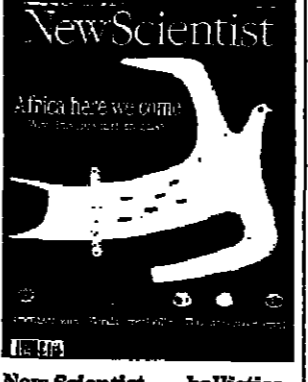
Deep thoughts

IF YOU ever drop your keys into a river or lake, let'em go, because, man, they're gone.

Deep Thoughts from Saturday Night Live's Jack Handey. You tend to hear some serene music in the background, and the words belong scroll across the screen in elegant script while a sombre voice reads the words aloud. All completely inappropriate. Sent to Jackdaw via the Anarchist listserver. Thanks to Michael Jovic.

Balled over MOUSE balls available as FRU (Field Replacement Unit) Mouse balls are now available as FRU. Therefore, if

Job hunt OVER the years, the problem of finding the right person for the right job has consumed



simple: Each subject is sent to Africa to hunt elephants. The subsequent elephant-hunting behaviour is then categorised by comparison to the classification rules outlined below.

elephants you catch with the people who voted for them. Lawyers don't hunt elephants, but they do follow the herds around arguing about who owns the droppings. Software lawyers will claim that they own an entire herd based on the look and feel of one dropping.

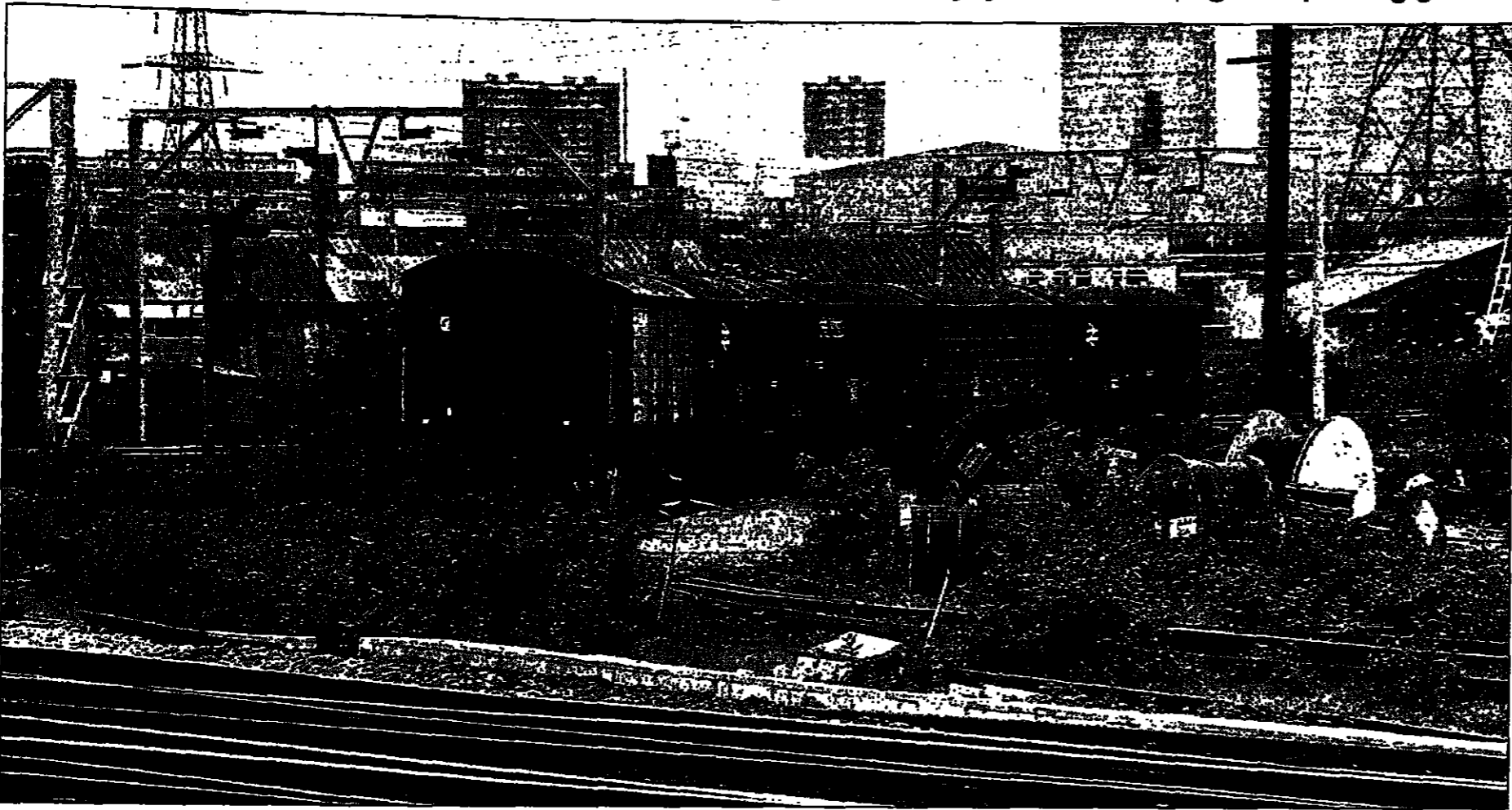
Emily Sheffield

Brent Walker calls time on Pubmaster chain, page 12
Kwik Save to shut 100 stores, page 12

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
Telephone: 0171-239-9610
Fax: 0171-833-4456

Finance Guardian

Transport chief orders severe cuts to repair damage caused by 'years of unmitigated pricing greed'



Railroaded... privatised firm's chief executive says British Rail demands drove all but the largest shippers into the arms of road hauliers

PHOTOGRAPH: ALAN REVELL

BR 'killed off rail freight'

Keith Harper
Transport Editor

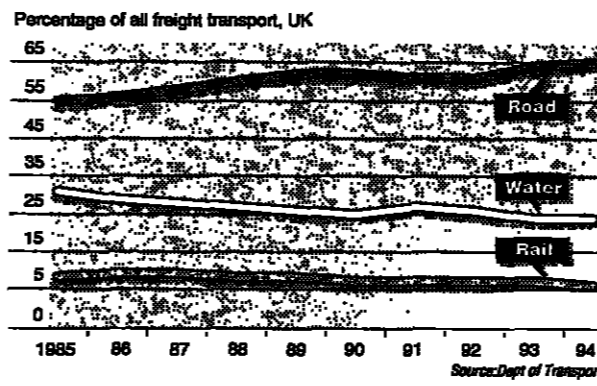
THE chief executive of the newly privatised rail freight industry, Ed Burkhardt, has ordered radical cost cuts to offset British Rail's years of "unmitigated greed in pricing". In a letter to his 8,000 staff, Mr Burkhardt, an American rail entrepreneur who earlier this year bought BR's four freight companies for £250 million, admits to the continuing frailty of his business. He concedes that the company will have to reduce costs significantly to stay solvent.

opportunity because the market simply will not support the pricing of the BR era." Rail union leaders last night said that they feared widespread job cuts, although Mr Burkhardt's letter goes out of its way to congratulate staff on the way they have responded to the new regime. The letter lambastes BR's role in the freight market, where it consistently lost out to the road lobby and ended up with only 6 per cent of the freight market. Mr Burkhardt accuses BR of "poisoning the well wherever it went", making it impossible for anyone but the largest shippers to use rail. He says that BR made enemies by forcing customers to buy their own wagons and even their own locomotives, with the result that "there has been a steady decline in volume". EWS has only 100 customers, whereas Mr Burkhardt's American operation, Wisconsin Central, a much smaller system, deals with 670 businesses.

The letter says that some new customers are willing to give EWS a try, "but there are a number who remain thoroughly dissatisfied with our prices and services". These customers will "desert us in a minute if we cannot negotiate replacement contracts to meet their needs". The letter goes on: "We will address these concerns, but it is going to take a major effort on the part of every EWS employee to make things right with these customers. And it will take major reductions in our pricing. Mr Burkhardt's view of his customers is that they range from "some of the sweetest and most co-operative people you will ever meet to those who are meaner than a junk yard dog". Most of their ideas of what a railway could do were shaped from a lifetime of dealing with BR, "which means that we have a real task on our hands to change our act". The company is to adopt stricter safety standards for its rolling stock than at present apply in Britain. Mr Burkhardt is also concerned about the lack of broad-band radios in train operations and is to discuss with Railtrack the safety implications. Christopher Nicholas, secretary of the Rail Freight Group, described Mr Burkhardt's remarks as "refreshing". He said the company had already made an impact on the industry which would be reflected by a growth in traffic when figures are published next year.

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Rail freight decline



Notebook

With trust comes accountability



Edited by Alex Brummer

THE Government had little choice but to find parliamentary time for legislation allowing professional firms to become limited-liability partnerships. The big accounting, legal and surveying firms are part of the infrastructure that has helped foster the City's role as Europe's most important financial centre. Driving the firms offshore to Jersey and other centres, which seemed likely until the Government's intervention, would make no sense. When the City Research Project looked at the professions in 1994, it found that three of the top seven and 10 of the 40 law firms in the world are British-based. The biggest London firm then, Clifford Chance, was a business earning more than £200 million - £280,000 per equity partner. The big six accounting firms in the UK generated income of £3 billion a year and employed nearly 30,000 people. Even if only a small percentage of this business were technically removed offshore, it would have been damaging, undermining the competitive position of the Square Mile.

and legal firms would like. The apparent errors made by some of the largest firms of auditors in situations such as Lloyd's of London and BCCI should be sorted out by the law courts. Auditors, lawyers and surveyors - whose valuations in cases such as Queens Moat House have turned out to be wildly wrong - do not deserve any special protection beyond limiting the liability of partners. Had the law been very different, the chances of forcing auditors to contribute to the rescue plan for Lloyd's of London or the trust fund for Maxwell pensioners would have been much reduced. City auditors and law firms are among the largest earners in the business community - although they seldom attract the opprobrium faced by high-rollers in the boardroom. With the generous fees come responsibilities and risks, and these should continue to be corporately carried by the professional firms. Legal liability is the ultimate weapon against poor practice, and as Lloyd's Names, depositors in BCCI, Maxwell pensioners, Barings bondholders and Polly Peck shareholders could testify - there has been plenty of it. But there is a broader issue. It is in the professionals that all stakeholders in the business community place their trust. The appearance of the name of one of the big six accounting firms or the more prestigious City legal houses in reports and accounts or an official document is taken by many as a stamp of approval. When matters go wrong - as they inevitably will sometimes - it would be a betrayal of that trust if the professionals were able to walk away relatively unharmed.

Domestic call

BRITISH Telecom will not be able to scrimp and save on its investment in Britain to fund its ever-increasing overseas adventures. Industry regulator Don Cruickshank believes that BT's British customers are entitled to the best telecom service in the world and he intends to continue to lean on the company to provide it. It will not be good enough for BT to maintain its network and services at today's level. If other companies can do better, so must BT. This is right. There is nothing wrong with BT having global ambitions. Britain stands to gain from having its leading telecom group as one of the select few which will have the size, expertise and financial strength to shape the global networks of the future. But this must not be achieved at the expense of the ordinary customer. Business customers have the spending power and expertise to get the big telecom groups to provide the services and standards they want. Individuals lack that power, however, and must rely on the regulator - and his legal responsibilities under the Telecommunications Act - to protect their interest at home.

Dresdner fund management shifts to US

Kleinwort name could be dropped in £30bn shake-up, Dominic Walsh reports

GERMANY'S Dresdner Bank, owner since last year of UK merchant bank Kleinwort Benson, is expected to unveil a radical restructuring of its international fund management operations. The move will create a global business based in the US with managed funds of £30 billion of which just under half is held in the City. It will put its London-based fund management arm - Kleinwort Benson Investment Management - under the control of RCM Capital Management, the San Francisco-based investment group acquired by Dresdner in June for \$300 million. Dresdner refused to comment last night, but there were suggestions that the shake-up, which excludes Dresdner's domestic German operations, might eventually mean the disappearance of the Kleinwort name as a fund manager. The company's investment banking division is unaffected. The reorganisation is part of a wider move towards the globalisation of fund management. Last month, Barclays announced the merger of its two institutional management arms as Barclays Global Investors. This followed the acquisition last year of San Francisco-based Wells Fargo Nikko Investments. The Dresdner restructuring is expected to take in firms such as Hong Kong-based

Thornton Management, which has a small operation in London. A source at KBIM, which has about £14.3 billion under management, said: "RCM will become the linchpin of operations. Excluding the domestic German business, that will create a single business with more than £30 billion under management." The source said the move would ultimately see the disappearance of some established brand names, though a decision had yet to be taken on whether Kleinwort would be one of them. "That issue could take months to resolve," he said. The decision to make RCM the focus for Dresdner's international money management is unlikely to come as a surprise to analysts. RCM, which was founded in 1970, is highly regarded for offering its US clients a successful mix of domestic and international stocks and bonds. Its client list reads like a Who's Who of institutional investors, including AT&T and Coca-Cola. When Dresdner bought RCM, commentators predicted it would become the focus for the Frankfurt-based bank's efforts to compete with other leading European banks. London banking experts expressed little surprise at the subordination of KBIM. "Any change must be for the better," said one. "The Kleinwort connection does its fund managers little good." The decision is in contrast to Dresdner's dealings with its UK subsidiary's investment banking arm. Last month it announced its intention to centralise its European dealings in the City and there have been unconfirmed rumours of similar plans for its foreign exchange business.

Lang acts to stem offshore tide

Sarah Pyle THE Government acted last night to halt a threatened exodus from Britain of top professional firms which are furious that they have to foot huge legal bills when companies go bust. Ian Lang, the Trade and Industry Secretary, has come under increasing pressure from leading accountancy, legal and other professional bodies following claims for billions of pounds against firms over collapses such as

BCCI. The CBI led the latest protest, writing to Mr Lang on Wednesday about its concerns. The firms have also campaigned against legislation which leaves individual partners who have had nothing to do with a failed company stripped of their assets if colleagues are found to have been negligent. Mr Lang yesterday announced he would speed up plans to protect individual partners but came under immediate criticism for failing to protect the firms themselves. Under current law, if a

company goes bust after management failure then creditors can sue auditors or lawyers for 100 per cent of their damages even if the auditors were judged to have been only partly responsible for the collapse. Ernst & Young, which is being sued by fellow accountants Deloitte & Touche in connection with the BCCI failure, has threatened to move its headquarters to Jersey where the law is in the process of being changed to protect partners. Mr Lang said in a written answer to a parliamentary

question that he had decided to bring forward proposals for change to "maintain a competitive and up-to-date legal framework for UK businesses" and pledged to publish details before Easter. Deloitte & Touche said it would become a limited-liability partnership in the UK if a "satisfactory" law were passed. But Ernst & Young's head of risk management, Jos Nangle, said: "We are encouraged by this statement but it will not change our plans to move to Jersey, where the law is closer to being introduced."

Frankfurt woos City brokers with free calls

Mark Miller IN AN effort to woo business from London, the Frankfurt Stock Exchange is offering to waive communication fees for firms outside Germany which hook up to its electronic shares and derivatives dealing services. The move, which could save firms up to 25,200 a month, is part of a campaign by the Frankfurt market to build up its cross-border business ahead of the launch of the European single currency. Deutsche Borse is already planning a range of euro-denominated products ready for trading in the wake of currency union - a market in which there is certain to be fierce competition if monetary union goes ahead at the beginning of 1999. According to Dr Jörg Franke, a senior Deutsche Borse executive, trading on the DTB (Frankfurt's derivatives market) is already cheaper than on its London rival, Liffe. "We will make it a lot cheaper," he said.

EC wants more details before deciding how to look at BT deal

Nicholas Bamister
Technology Editor EUROPEAN competition commissioner Karel Van Miert said yesterday he was seeking further information about British Telecom's £12 billion bid for its US partner MCI before deciding how it will be scrutinised. Mr Van Miert has asked the companies to provide more information about the size of their turnover in Europe. The companies would prefer the bid to be examined under the European Commission's fast-track merger rules rather than under the broader concerted practices and fair trading regulations. A decision is expected in the next few days. BT's decision to create a telecom super-group is expected to put pressure on the newly-resigned Japanese coalition government to reach a speedy decision about the future of NTT, the country's main domestic operator and BT's preferred Far Eastern partner. BT and MCI, Deutsche Telekom, France Telecom and Sprint, and AT&T and Uni-

Costain expected to sell US coal interests

Patrick Donovan
City Editor TROUBLED construction group Costain looks set to secure its future by selling off its mining operation, US Coal, for an estimated £50 million as part of a wide-ranging financial reconstruction programme expected to be announced today. Shares in the loss-making company were suspended at 4p as directors finalised details yesterday. Costain declined to comment beyond saying "an announcement regarding Costain's continuing asset disposal process and subsequent financial arrangements" would follow. It is the second time shares have been suspended in five months. It is widely expected that Malaysian construction group Intria, which holds a 40 per cent stake, will play a key role in the deal. The Far East investor yesterday said it hoped to "turn the company around within one year". It took its stake as part of August's refinancing deal which injected another £70.6 million into Costain, cutting borrowings from £101 million to £18 million. Any further financing could result in the permanent delisting of Costain shares as 77 per cent of the stock is concentrated in the hands of its three largest investors, Intria, Kuwait-based Khazra and Saudi group Raymond International. Stock Exchange rules require at least 25 per cent of shares to be held in the open market. City sources said that the sale of US Coal is "definitely part of the deal".

THE BIG DEAL

source all now straddle Europe and North America. But they all lack a strong partner in the Far East who would complete their global reach and give them access to the fast-growing Asia-Pacific countries. Asia contains about 60 per cent of the world's population. NTT, the world's largest telecom group, cannot act as an international operator in Japan under current legislation, though it is helping to build phone networks in Thailand, India, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam. The Ministry of Post and Telecommunications was initially in favour of a plan to split NTT into a domestic long-distance carrier and two regional operators. However, the new government coalition is now expected to allow NTT to become an international carrier to ensure that Japan has a powerful say in shaping the global market. But the telecoms ministry does not want to unleash NTT to quickly. It wants to give KDD, the country's much smaller international operator, time to establish itself in the domestic market. It is also counting on NTT building most of the country's national information super-highway, due to be finished in 2015. But telecom groups aiming at becoming truly global carriers want to carry the Far East's lucrative business and international traffic rather

CONCERT

but only 15 per cent of its telephones, so the growth potential is huge. But telecom groups aiming at becoming truly global carriers want to carry the Far East's lucrative business and international traffic rather

TOURIST RATES - BANK SELLS

Country	Rate	Country	Rate	Country	Rate		
Australia	2.0175	France	8.22	Italy	2.470	Singapore	2.280
Austria	17.17	Germany	2.4490	Japan	5.3735	South Africa	7.33
Belgium	50.22	Greece	387.00	Netherlands	2.7425	Spain	325.15
Canada	2.14	Hong Kong	12.41	New Zealand	2.25	Sweden	10.77
Cyprus	0.7390	India	52.75	Norway	10.20	Switzerland	2.04
Denmark	8.1465	Ireland	0.9725	Portugal	247.70	Turkey	155.225
Finland	7.4650	Israel	5.34	Saudi Arabia	6.13	USA	1.51

Retailers report gloom and boom



Taking stock... a Kwik Save staff member takes time out to absorb the news from company headquarters

PHOTOGRAPH: MARTIN ANGLIS

Kwik Save to shut 100 stores

OUTLOOK/Errors by discounter will cost jobs, says LISA BUCKINGHAM

KWIK Save, the price-cutting supermarket group, plans to shut more than 100 of its stores, putting a question mark over the future of 1,900 of its full-time and temporary employees.

The company, which yesterday reported a 28 per cent slump in profits to just over £50 million, said the closures were part of a radical overhaul of its business, which has been severely wounded by the value ranges launched by upmarket rivals such as Tesco and Sainsbury.

It hopes, however, to redeploy about 90 per cent of the employees working in the doomed outlets, which will begin to close at the start of next year.

But the Kwik Save revamp — which cost nearly £38 million in provisions this time round, will involve another £18 million in write-offs over the next two years and absorb the best part of £150 million in capital spending before the end of 1998 — appears less than convincing.

Sainsbury, which is battling for supremacy at the

other end of the supermarket price spectrum, said recently that the impact of the discounters was on the wane. Kwik Save's struggle appears to endorse that in spades.

Although sales hit a record of £3.5 billion — helped by price inflation of about 2.5 per cent — everything else, except the dividend, of course, went sharply backwards. Even before the huge exceptional charge related to the restructuring, profits were lower than they have been since 1990. Underlying gross margins fell by 0.1 per cent of sales, and overheads and distribution costs were up.

As Sainsbury did when it recently announced a profits nosedive, Kwik Save yesterday admitted its faults. It had failed to be sufficiently customer-oriented, had gone too much for the deal, tried to expand too much, had not offered "modern" goods such as fresh produce, health and beauty items, and paraphernalia for babies.

With the help of £4 million of advice from Andersen Consulting, that is about to be put right, according to chief executive Graeme Bowler.

Mr Bowler's assertions about the revitalisation of Kwik Save were undermined, however, by his refusal to provide firm predictions about what the "new generation Kwik Save" will achieve. Yes, he said, in three to five years' time cost savings would outweigh expenditure on the facilities. But he declined to put a figure on those savings for fear of "creating a hostage to fortune".

Kwik Save, he said, did not want to set any false expectations among its staff, the public or its investors.

Wholly laudable. But it seemed a tad cowardly not to provide targets against which the "new generation" programme — and the management overseeing it — can be judged.

Mr Bowler did say, however, that the introduction of a Kwik Save own-brand range, together with the expansion of higher-margin products, was designed to increase from £9.20 to £10 the cost of the average shopping basket in the store. This could add £375 million a year to sales.

But even such an increase, on reduced sales footage, will leave Kwik Save trailing in the wake of Safeway, Asda, Sainsbury, Tesco and even the deep-discounter Aldi in

terms of sales per square foot. At present Kwik Save's sales per square foot are well under half that achieved by Sainsbury.

The struggle does not stop there. Kwik Save is probably three or four years behind its largest rivals in terms of information technology — it can accept payments on Switch cards but it lacks the computers to make any use of the shopping information.

Shares in the company rose on the figures and the relief but, according to one analyst, this was more out of a sense of relief that things were not worse than any faith in a swift recovery.

In fact, profits in the current financial year are expected to drop to about £32 million and could fall by another £15 million the year after.

One of the problems the group faces is how to turn its sales force into something approaching a consumer-oriented body rather than a gaggle of people, many of whom, at best, appear to be on YTS schemes.

It may be an advantage that the company will face almost no redundancy costs from the closure of 107 stores because so many of its employees are on temporary contracts, but when it comes to providing

Kwik Save

Stock market value: £487m
Share price: 321p ▲ 17p
Workforce: 23,000
Interest cover: 19*

Main activity: The company has a chain of nearly 1,000 discount supermarkets

	£	% change
Sales	3,500	2.5
Pre-tax profit	30.5m*	(28)
Earnings per share	37.88p	(27)
Dividend	20p	

Have the discounters peaked?

Share of packed groceries trade: 16% (1992-1996)
Discount shoppers' average basket size: 12 £ (1992-1996)

Service this simply will not do. Even Mr Bowler had to admit that a rethink was needed before the company could "incentivise" a workforce among whom more than 40 per cent are temporary staff.

Burton's £151m confidence boost

TONY May, chief executive of Burton Menswear, said it was the first time in years that all operations had been profitable. Turnover had risen by £346 million since six years ago when losses were £195 million.

Burton Menswear, had made a £3.3 million profit, its first for three years, but would take years to return to full health.

The group has been building its brands and applying better trading disciplines to switch a vast proportion of sales from discount to full-priced goods.

Finance director Andrew Higginson confirmed that

the last two months had shown a return of consumer confidence. "The picture is better than it has been for quite some time, but there is no sign of it being a real boom."

Margins had risen by 2.3 percentage points. "We still see some scope for margin improvement but I don't think it's going to be anything like it has been for the last two years."

Commenting on last week's base rate rise, he said: "We're a little disappointed that the Chancellor felt the need to dampen down enthusiasm. It's not inflationary at the moment."

because it benefited consumers by keeping pharmacists within local communities — in contrast to supermarket Asda's argument for lower consumer prices.

Sir Angus said the Boots the Chemist shop chain — which dominates the UK market — was well placed whichever side won the argument.

In addition to the 1,300-strong pharmacy chain, Boots owns retail chains Halfords, Do It All, Homestyle, and A.G. Stanley. All reported improved results, but the leader was Boots the Chemist, with a 12 per cent rise in operating profit to £184 million. The board plans pilot stores in the

Boots prescribes profits rise

FINANCIAL staff

THE consumer boom helped Boots push up profits 9.4 per cent to £239 million in the first half of the year. Chairman Sir Michael Angus said he was confident of good Christmas and New Year sales, although competition remains tough.

Chief executive Lord Blyth insisted Boots was not worried about the investigation by the Restrictive Practices Court into resale price maintenance on over-the-counter medicines. Sir Michael said the group was in favour of retaining price maintenance

Netherlands, Thailand, Japan and Ireland.

Do it All's sales in the first half were up 3.4 per cent to £191.3 million and operating losses were down from £9.6 million to £3.7 million.

The period saw Boots reposition itself in the retail market. It completed the sale of Childrens World to Storehouse for £62.5 million; received the final £73 million from the sale of Boots pharmaceuticals to Germany's BASF, purchased the other half of Do It All from W.E. Smith for £30 million; and bought Laboratoires Lutsia SA, a French skin-care manufacturer, for £15 million.

support for minimum wage

THE minimum wage has gained support among heads of British export firms who see it as a key factor in providing competitive business, according to a survey published today. DHL, the international courier firm, which commissioned the Gallup survey, said: "It is only by investing in the skilled work force of tomorrow that British businesses can hope to remain competitive in an increasingly globalised marketplace." Although 40 per cent of directors and managers support the minimum wage, compared with a third last year, there is still resistance among exporters using low-skill labour, DHL said.

More than half of the exporters said they were unfamiliar with the consequences of a single currency, compared with 41 per cent a year ago. — Sarah Fyle

Brent sells Pubmaster to syndicate

Dominic Walsh

BRENT Walker, the ailing leisure group, confirmed yesterday that it is to sell its Pubmaster pub chain for £171.3 million to a syndicate of institutions led by NatWest Ventures.

The company said that the deal, which will be completed later this month subject to shareholder approval, would enable it to repay debts of £143.6 million. This will still leave it at the mercy of its bankers, to whom it owes well over £1 billion.

John Brackebury, the former chairman of Pubmaster who abruptly resigned from the Brent Walker board in May, is returning as chairman of the 1,700-strong chain, while John Sanson, the business's managing director since its inception, becomes chief executive.

The acquisition is being made through a new company, Berryboss, in which the management team will be taking a stake of up to 10 per cent. Berryboss is being backed by NatWest Ventures and Prudential Venture Managers on the equity side, with HSBC and the Bank of Scotland arranging the debt.

Total funding is £150 million, giving management nearly £20 million to invest in upgrading the estate.

Pubmaster, which Brent Walker had originally hoped to float for up to £200 million, made an operating profit last year of £17.1 million, and Mr Brackebury predicted a rise this year of 10-15 per cent.

Following the disposal, Brent Walker — whose founder, George Walker, once presided over a sprawling leisure empire covering casinos, marinas and hotels — will be left with the William Hill betting shop chain as its only substantial asset. There are said to be no plans to sell it.

Pubmaster, one of Britain's biggest independent pub companies, was formed in 1991 to run Brent Walker's estate, which was then made up of pubs acquired from Tolly Cobbold, Cameron and Grand Metropolitan. The following year it expanded through the acquisition of units from Allied Domecq and Whitbread, and in 1995 took over Brent Walker's Inn Style Leisure business, which operates more than 4,000 amusement machines.

The majority of its pub estate is tenanted, and the deal announced yesterday — at around 11 times earnings — is in marked contrast to some of the recent transactions in the pub and restaurant sector, where leisure and brewing giants have shown a willingness to pay hefty premiums for strong brands capable of being rolled out nationally.

Whitbread, for example, bought Pelican Group in July for £133 million — around 24 times earnings — while in September Rank paid £26 million for Tom Cobleigh, which has just 60 pubs.

Of Pubmaster's nearly 1,700 units, only 112 are managed houses, carrying brands such as Tap & Spile and BierKex, a continental café-bar concept. Mr Brackebury said the focus would be on the tenanted estate.

News in brief

US group adds £85m to electricity stake

CE ENERGY, the US power group bidding for Northern Electric, yesterday rushed into the market and spent nearly £85 million to boost its stake to 28.8 per cent, brushing aside growing City fears that the Government will block the latest US bids for electricity companies. The move — described by one City watcher as a "giant punt" — leaves Northern looking stranded in its attempts to fight off the bid unless the Trade Secretary, Ian Lang, refers the latest bids to the Monopolies Commission.

With the City convinced he might, shares in the four regional electricity companies still independent slumped heavily yesterday as East Midlands gave short shrift to the latest US approach, from Dominion Resources which has indicated it might offer 60p per share. "At this level, our clear advice to shareholders would be to reject such an offer," the chairman, Nigel Rudd, said. The US group will hold a full board meeting in the next two days to decide whether to proceed. — Simon Beavis

Support for minimum wage

THE minimum wage has gained support among heads of British export firms who see it as a key factor in providing competitive business, according to a survey published today. DHL, the international courier firm, which commissioned the Gallup survey, said: "It is only by investing in the skilled work force of tomorrow that British businesses can hope to remain competitive in an increasingly globalised marketplace." Although 40 per cent of directors and managers support the minimum wage, compared with a third last year, there is still resistance among exporters using low-skill labour, DHL said.

More than half of the exporters said they were unfamiliar with the consequences of a single currency, compared with 41 per cent a year ago. — Sarah Fyle

Ex-diplomat's French move

PAULINE Neville-Jones, a diplomat who resigned from the Foreign Office after she was refused the ambassadorship in Paris, is to become the chairman of NatWest Markets' French subsidiary which employs about 230 people. The investment banking division of National Westminster Bank said Ms Neville-Jones, who joined in June, will remain Global Head of Business Strategy. Ms Neville-Jones joined the Foreign Office in 1983. She had assignments in Zimbabwe, Singapore, Washington and Bonn and was an adviser to Carl Bildt, the chief international administrator in Bosnia, in negotiations leading up to the Bosnian peace accord.

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Boxing

Holyfield too keen for his own good

Frank Keating in Las Vegas fears for the proud challenger Mike Tyson faces tomorrow night

FOR the credibility of world heavyweight boxing... Holyfield, a former undisputed champion and a good one...



Don't miss it... US pay-per-view offers a discount if Tyson, here with his trainer Stacy McKimley, wins quickly TOM CASO

mirrored him for cashing in on his one night of glory... Tyson is normal. He must box and move and not get lured...

nothing left after three or four rounds. If it gets to the fifth, like I told his trainer Don Turner yesterday... "Holyfield will cold-cock him a couple of times, which will get Tyson mad and we will see how the younger man reacts then..."

Racing

Punters get hearing from Levy Board

Chris Hawkins

FOR several years the National Association of Punters (NAPP) has been striving for official recognition... The group comprising Sir Paul Fox, Peter George (Ladbrokes), Lord Harrington and Sir Thomas Pilkington...

Doncaster runners and riders with form

Table with 3 columns: Race number, Race name, and list of runners with their jockeys and trainers.

Hexham (N.H.)

Table with 3 columns: Race number, Race name, and list of runners with their jockeys and trainers.

Uttoxeter (N.H.)

Table with 3 columns: Race number, Race name, and list of runners with their jockeys and trainers.

Results

Table with 3 columns: Race number, Race name, and the winning runner/jockey.

Advertisement for RACELINE featuring a horse named DONCASTER and other racing information.

Advertisement for Halling retired, featuring a horse named Halling and other racing information.

Advertisement for RACELINE, featuring a horse named DONCASTER and other racing information.

Soccer

Collymore rapped on knuckles

Ian Hoos

LIVERPOOL'S patience with Stan Collymore finally ran out yesterday when the erratic England international forward was fined £20,000 and warned as to his future conduct for refusing to play in a reserve-team game.

The largest fine imposed on a player by the Anfield club followed Collymore's failure to turn up for a Pontins League fixture at Tranmere Rovers on Wednesday night. With an estimated basic income of about £780,000 a year, his latest indiscretion has cost him a little over a week's wage.

The task of announcing the decision yesterday fell to Liverpool's manager Roy Evans, the man who bought Collymore from Nottingham Forest for £8.5 million, then a record British transfer fee, and who in the past has moved heaven and earth in defending Anfield's *enfant terrible*.

"Stan Collymore was selected for the reserve team on Wednesday," said Evans. "He told us in the morning that he didn't want to play and he failed to turn up for the game. We will be taking appropriate disciplinary action."

Yesterday's development will undoubtedly come to represent a defining moment in Collymore's Liverpool career, which may now have months rather than years to run.

On Wednesday, when it became clear that he had not arrived, Prenton Park echoed to the familiar sound of ranks rapidly closing. When asked why Collymore had not joined his England colleagues Neil Ruddock and John Scales on

the pitch, Evans said: "Stan rang in in the afternoon to say he was sick."

Even from a loyal manager it was a curious explanation, bearing in mind that Collymore's name was still on the official team sheet at 6.30pm. But after members of the Anfield hierarchy were informed of Collymore's absence, attitudes hardened immediately and considerably. The decision was reached late on Wednesday night and Collymore was informed when, perhaps surprisingly, he reported for training at 10 yesterday morning.

Last season, after losing his regular first-team place, Collymore was reprimanded for comments he made in a magazine article. More recently he was told he must relocate to the North-west after experiencing trouble in travelling to Merseyside from the Midlands.

His working relationship with Evans and his teammates has been strained and there are unsubstantiated tales of missed training sessions and friction between him and several of Liverpool's other senior professionals.

The crunch may well come tomorrow afternoon when Liverpool's reserves are scheduled to play Sheffield Wednesday's at Anfield. Any second refusal to play would almost certainly precipitate Collymore's immediate suspension.

Privately, Liverpool would like to off-load a player who is perceived to be tarnishing the club's reputation. The problem is that, having invested so heavily in him, Liverpool would require an offer of about £6 million before they would consider sanctioning his departure.

Zola poised to join Chelsea's Italian family for record £5m

GIANFRANCO ZOLA is signing for Chelsea to become the third high-profile Italian captured by Ruud Gullit, who will pay a club-record £5 million to the Serie A club Parma for the highly experienced forward.

Parma officials said last night that the clubs had agreed a fee for the 30-year-old Zola, who is a mainstay of the Italian international side.

Zola is expected to earn around £25,000 per week under a four-year contract with the Stamford Bridge club, which will see him join his fellow countrymen Gianluca Vialli and Roberto Di Matteo and Gullit's other foreign signing, the Frenchman Frank Leboeuf.

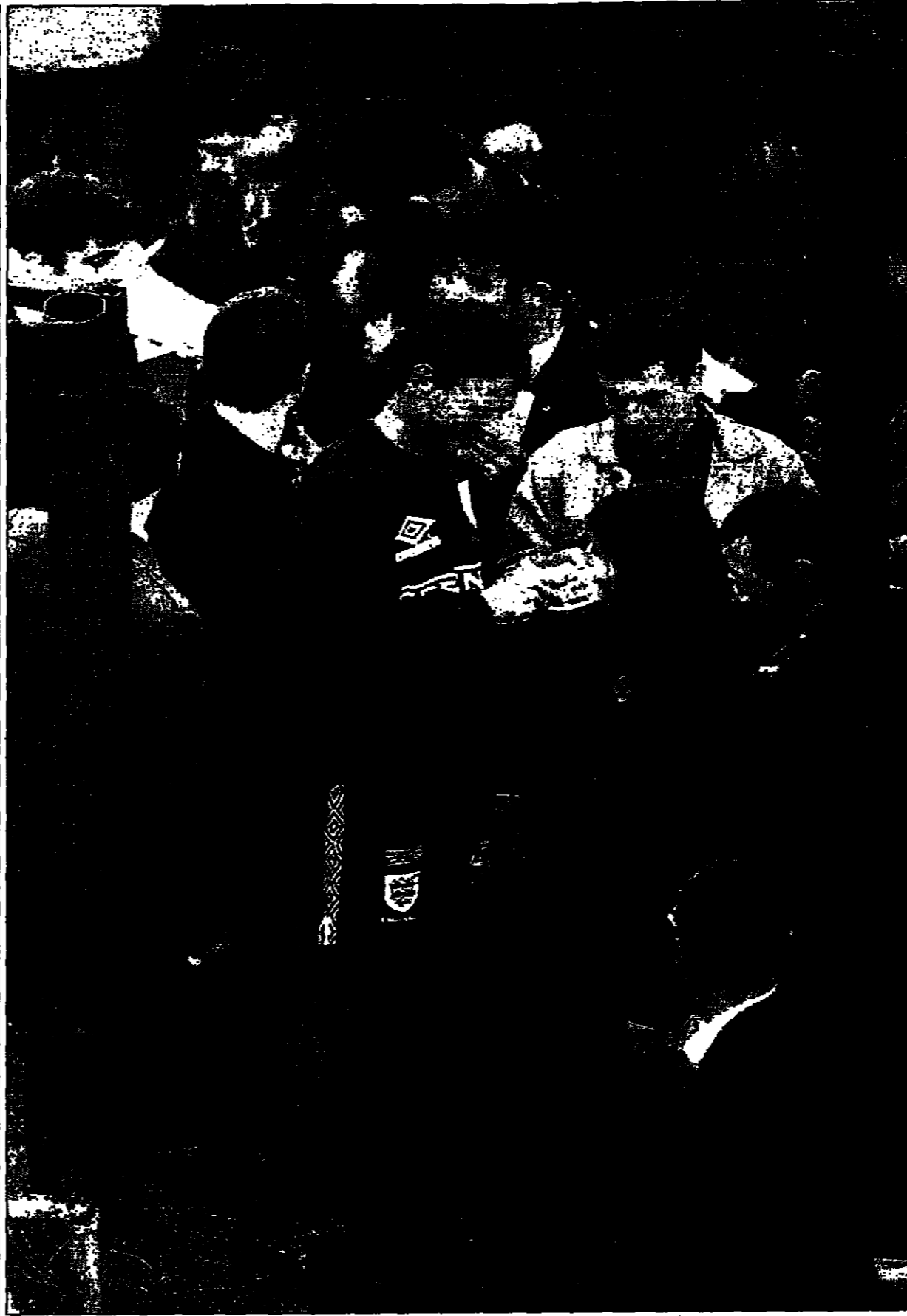
As part of the agreement, said Parma, the clubs will meet twice in friendly matches, the first on November 27 and the return in July. Chelsea's managing direc-

tor Colin Hutchinson flew out to Italy yesterday to finalise the deal with Parma, which narrowly exceeds the £4.9 million paid for Di Matteo in summer.

Zola, who made his name with Napoli, has been unhappy this season with a new role in Parma's team handed him by the club's new coach Carlo Ancelotti.

Last night Ancelotti buried his differences with the hugely gifted Zola. "It's sad to see him go," said the coach. "But if he has been able to get a good deal, that's good for us too. We're both happy."

Gullit's latest big-money coup will encourage Chelsea fans to believe that the death of Matthew Harding — whose close friend Peter Middleton resigned from the Chelsea board yesterday — has not lowered the club's ambitions or immediately limited the manager's spending power.



Signing session... Sheringham, keen for Hoddle to 'like him', settles for autograph hunters yesterday ROSS KINCAID

England's finest in for a bumpy ride

GLENN HODDLE yesterday registered his surprise at the Thrilisi pitch's deterioration since March 1986, when he played on the same surface for the England side that defeated USSR here in Bobby Robson's reign.

Since Chris Waddle scored the only goal in that game, a civil war and Georgian independence have intervened and, as in Moldova, the difficulties the new country is experiencing are understandable.

"If they have a big roller I'll be asking them to use it when we've finished training, but I am sure they would have done anyway," said Hoddle. "It has deteriorated in the 10 years, that's for sure."

"It's patchy — bare and brown with bits of green — but the main problem is it is very divoty. It's worse than Moldova — but it won't suit them either because they are a very technical side."

For Hoddle's squad, with a five-hour time difference, "The body clock obviously needs an adjustment," he said. But England trained on the pitch at 6pm yesterday to coincide with the local kick-off time and will do so again today.

"Everyone's fit and my selection will not be determined by injuries," Hoddle added. "I know the team in my own mind but it will not be announced until before kick-off."

England colours as a member of the Under-21 team facing Georgia in Batumi in the UEFA Championship. The 19-year-old Manchester United defender, capped at senior level against China in May, replaces the injured Wimbledon full-back Ben Thatcher.

2002-03 UEFA Championship Group Two v Georgia, Batumi; Roy (C) Fallick; Newton (Charlton), Hoddle (Alan Shearer) (Shearer), Shearer (A. Villa), Carson (Derry), Thompson (Lowe), Burt (Alan Shearer), Burt (C) Fallick; Shearer (Pavlich), Shearer (Norwich). Subs to be named.

Shearingham out of key with Hoddle

David Lacey in Tbilisi on England's forward options for tomorrow's game

ENGLAND'S footballers awoke here yesterday to the strains of Bonnie Dundee piping up from the ground floor of the modern Austrian-owned hotel which has settled on the outskirts of this slightly battered old city like a visitor from outer space.

This is British Week in Georgia and like British weeks everywhere the occasion would not be complete without a kilt and bagpipes. Naturally the tavern in the basement is serving pub grub which includes an authentic ploughman's and a passable shepherd's pie, well, as the mash with doggy-looking bangers.

For the moment Glenn Hoddle's players are being cosseted in reasonably familiar surroundings, a Western European oasis in the Caucasian hinterland. This will change radically tomorrow, however, when they face Georgia in a World Cup qualifier in front of 75,000 noisily partisan fans in the Boris Paichadze Stadium.

Tomorrow, unlike those balmy Wednesday days and nights in Euro 96, football will not be coming home. But since England's prime concern will be to come home with three points, one of the most important decisions facing Hoddle is what to do about the attack in the absence of Alan Shearer, who is recovering from a groin operation.

Hoddle is not short of options but he is short of internationally viable options. The likely alternatives are in good form for their clubs but only Teddy Sheringham has anything approaching an England pedigree, and that is due principally to the success of his partnership with Shearer in Euro 96.

The choice facing Hoddle, broadly speaking, is Sheringham or Nick Barby lining up alongside Ian Wright or Les Ferdinand. Robbie Fowler and Matthew Le Tissier are less likely possibilities.

Barby was seen as a natural successor to Sheringham when he scored twice in the 0-0 win against China in Beijing on the eve of Euro 96. Hoddle played him in Moldova, where he scored again. Sheringham was unfit then and was only on the bench against Poland at Wembley.

The case for recalling Sheringham has been made stronger by Shearer's absence. The Georgia game is one that demands the Tottenham man's ability to hold an attack together, a quality as important defensively as it is in the matter of scoring goals.

Yesterday, however, Sheringham seemed to doubt

whether he would be in. "I wouldn't say I expected to be back, but I would hope to be," he said. "Every manager has his own opinions and he goes by them. The last manager (Terry Venables) liked me. At the moment this manager doesn't. I'm hoping to change that, like every player who is in the squad but not in the team."

The 40-yard pass that sent Ferdinand through for the winning goal against Bulgaria in March was strong evidence of Sheringham's qualities; evidence that became overwhelming with his massive contribution to the 4-1 victory over Holland in the European Championship.

As well as scoring twice he provided the pass that instigated the movement that led to Shearer's opening penalty, and then set up a second goal for Shearer after the sweetest of assists had footed the Dutch defence.

"I'm not the sort of guy who picks the ball up on the halfway line, goes past five players and then puts it into the top far corner with everyone saying 'What a great player!'" Sheringham reflected. "There are a lot of different aspects to my game, and that's for me to know and people to find out."

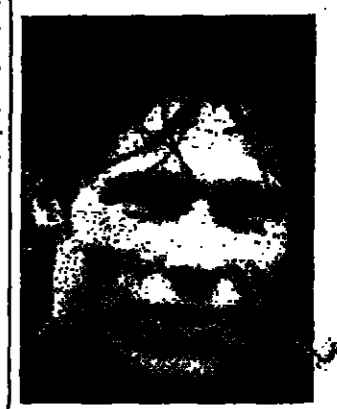
His biggest handicap at the higher level is a lack of pace which occasionally finds him out in one-to-one situations. This is where Barby might have a distinct edge when Hoddle comes to pick tomorrow's team. But, without Sheringham, can the England coach find any sort of combination which best begins to compensate for Shearer's absence?

Hoddle appears to be thinking seriously of bringing back the in-form Wright for what would be the Arsenal striker's first international in three seasons. "He's as sharp as a razor at the moment," he observed.

Not that anybody looked that sharp when England rounded off yesterday's training with a lachrymose shooting session which had the 100 odd spectators roaring with mirth as the finishing became increasingly high-watt.

Never that was yesterday. Gascoigne, for one, looked confident and relaxed. "He slept well," said Hoddle. "Laconically, bagpipes notwithstanding."

Barby... likely successor



Barby... likely successor

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Charlton guest of honour

Charles Stuart in Dublin

JACK CHARLTON, still a folk hero in Ireland after a decade of unprecedented success, will be among the full house of 35,000 at Lansdowne Road when his former Republic of Ireland charges line up against Iceland in their crucial Group Eight World Cup qualifying tie on Sunday.

The Dublin crowd contemplates nothing but a home win, a not unrealistic mood of optimism with their side unbeaten in the past three games with 11 goals scored and none conceded.

That run began against Bolivia, beaten 3-0 in a friendly match in the Giants Stadium in New Jersey in June, and the Republic's 5-0 triumph in Liechtenstein in August was followed by last month's 3-0 victory over Macedonia in Dublin.

Mick McCarthy, Charlton's preferred successor, is confident that the team can reach the World Cup finals for the third time in a row.

Since leaving international management last Christmas, Charlton has not watched any of McCarthy's 10 matches in charge but he has quietly encouraged his former captain from the sidelines and has no doubt that McCarthy is on the right course.

"Mick has his own ideas about the game," he said yesterday. "He has brought a lot of young players into the squad but he still has experienced men like Denis Irwin, Andy Townsend, John Aldridge and Tony Casciaro around."

"It's a nice blend and there is every possibility of reaching the World Cup finals again. The really difficult games in the group will be the home and away matches with Romania next year. That's why there can be no slip-up against Iceland."

Revived Price makes his Fat Lady sing on the greens

Michael Britton in Fasbat

NICK PRICE has a special affinity with the Hassan II Trophy here at Royal Dar Es Salam. The Zimbabwean saved himself from a barren 1995 by winning the golfing King of Morocco's annual promotion, and 12 months later he has started the 25th anniversary event in similar fashion to promise another victorious end to an unproductive year.

Price yesterday had a four-under-par 69 to share the first-round honours with Spain's Ignacio Garrido in the 72-hole strokeplay test. The defending champion, whose timing looks right again, is five strokes ahead of Sweden's Jesper Parnevik, who beat Europe's best to win the Lancôme Trophy in September, and six ahead of Sam Torrance.

The Scot explained his decision to follow Price's example and withdraw from the World Cup in South Africa in two weeks' time. "It is always hard deciding not to play for your country," he said, "but I am so tired that I just could not face the thought of another three weeks of golf."

"It would have been my 12th World Cup, but as I have qualified for the finals of the Andersen Consulting World Championship in Arizona early in January, I would not have been able to take a break. It is just too much."

Price too will miss the event, because of family commitments at home in Florida, where three months ago he was told that he did not need surgery for persistent sinus trouble.

"I had a brand of ME and it was so chronic that I would play with my children for two hours and then have to go to bed to rest," he said. "Because my resistance was low all my allergies came out and I got sinus infections for three months. The last point was when I could not play in the US Open, then when I ran out of steam at Royal Lytham."

Emerson must return to Boro

MIDDLESBROUGH'S unsettled Brazilian midfielder was yesterday ordered to return to Teesside, by the club's chairman Steve Gibson.

Gibson claimed Emerson would return on Tuesday. He added: "Emerson will not be allowed to leave. The other big signings are staying too. That would only change if it was beneficial to the club and to them, and at present it is not."

Emerson, signed from Portsmouth less than six months ago, has gone home to Brazil. He says his wife has been unable to settle in the area and he wants to be released from his contract.

Cowentry are considering offering £1 million for the Newcastle striker Darren Huckerby, who has gone to Highfield Road for a trial spell. The former England defender Paul Parker is to join Sheffield United after being released by Derby.

Cricket

Prodigal Tufnell tries to right the wrongs and finds that it hurts

David Hopps in Vale do Lobo to see the England players physically put to the test

PHIL TUFNELL might be assumed to be a natural devotee of a more old-fashioned training regime for the English first-class cricketer...

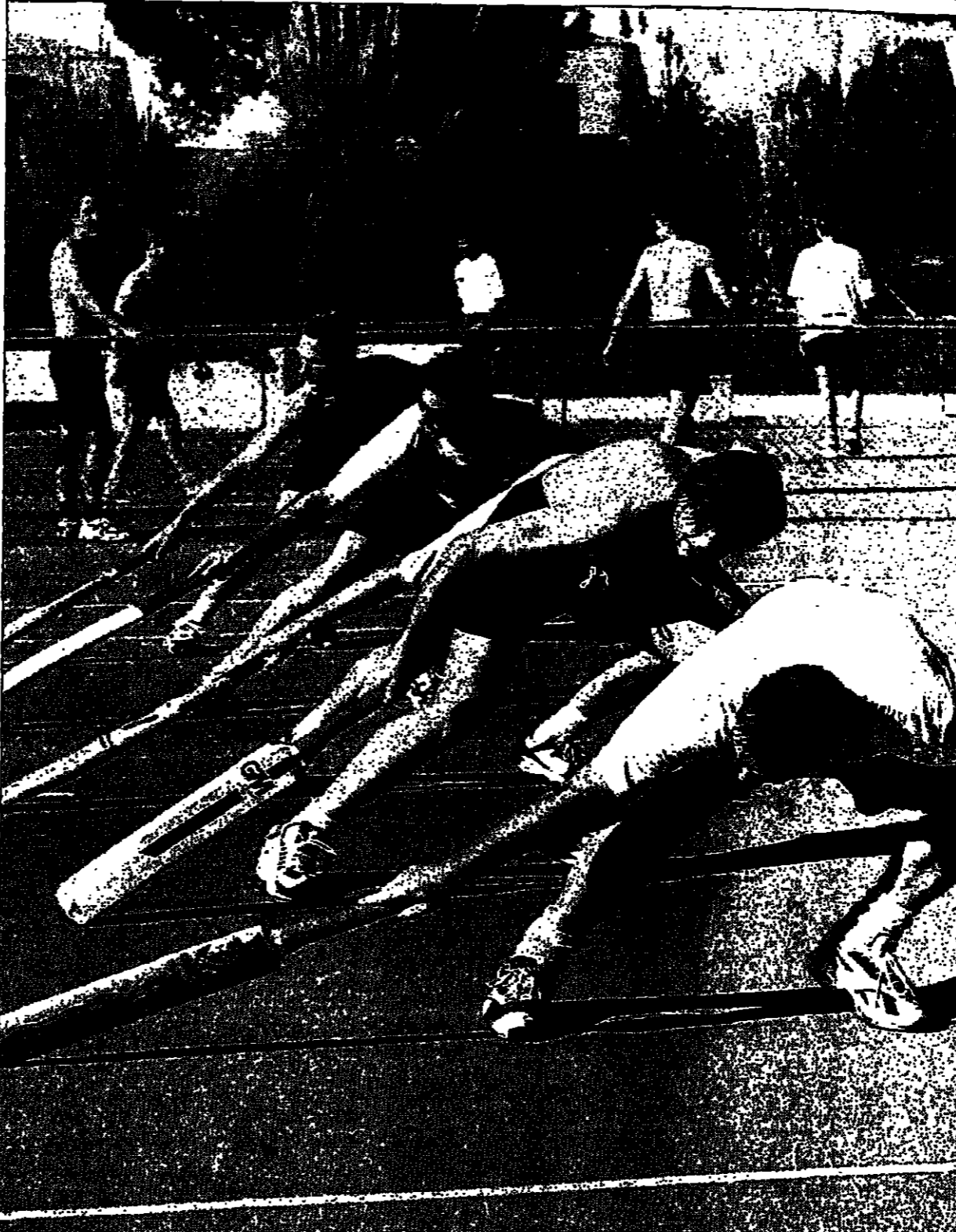
and Lloyd even speaks of converting the whole of county cricket to his beliefs, the sort of evangelical zeal which brings to mind missionaries and cannibals.

England's preparation at the Barrington's sports complex here in the Algarve in Portugal has been entirely fitness-orientated...

Tufnell returns to the fold proclaiming that he was "a bit too happy" on his first tour of Australia...



Tufnell out of puff... Alec Stewart walks off the pitch while Phil Tufnell allows his knees and elbows to take the strain



Run-down battery... England's players being stretched on the shuttle run, five at a time

"I can't be certain I'm not going to blow up on the field," he said, "although I don't intend to."

whether he possessed the resolve to force himself back into favour with England, but he bowled more than 800 first-class overs last season for Middlesex...

kicked myself for what happened in the past, but I wasn't punching the walls every morning because I wasn't in the England side...

clinging and running - to look forward to. Yesterday he also survived a series of shuttle runs called the phosphate test...

Rugby Union

Irish stance angers Lions coach

Ian Mallin

IAN MCGEECHAN, Northampton's director of rugby, was scathing of the Irish Rugby Union as half of tomorrow's Courage League One programme was postponed.

Northampton's match against Bath, for which 300 of the 8,000 tickets had been sold last night, is still on. But the Midlands club are without the booker Alan Clarke and the centre Jonathan Bell...

McGeechan has been critical of the fixture list which has scattered the home nations' internationals throughout the season rather than follow soccer's habit of playing them on the same days of weekends.

Tennis

Cool Schalken rises above the Courier propaganda

Richard Jago in Moscow

JIM COURIER was loudly trumpeted by his introduction during the knock-out. "This is one of the world's leading players... he has won the French Open and the Australian Open twice... he plays great drums and guitar... he gives thousands of dollars to charity."

hand down the line to avert a second. He flung down his racket and then pumped up the adrenalin after breaking for 4-2 in the second set. But Schalken proved a cool customer, and that he is one of the tour's most promising players...

Rugby League

Rescue package would make Wigan mere tenants

Paul Fitzpatrick

WIGAN may be as much as £2 million in debt, but they are reluctant to accept a rescue offer which in effect reduces them to tenants of what has been their home since 1902.

Sailing

Star takes a fall for Sydney

Bob Fisher

THE Star class, a veteran of 14 Olympic tournaments, is likely to be dropped from the Sydney Harbour regatta at the 2000 Games as a result of a decision taken at the International Sailing Federation (ISAF) annual conference in Brighton yesterday.

Snooker

Wales pipped

Clive Everton in Bangkok

JAMES WATTANA, who is synonymous with snooker on the pink, Davies kept an anguished host nation's hopes alive in the Castrol Honda World Cup by beating Mark Williams on the pink to secure a 10-9 quarter-final win over Wales.

Boxing

Naseem Hamed came face to face with Remigio Molina yesterday and told the Argentinian that he would knock him out in the second round of their WBO world featherweight title fight in Manchester tomorrow.

Swimming

Alexander Popov, Russia's double Olympic gold medal winner, can resume training next week, two months after the freestyle sprinter was knifed in the stomach in a Moscow street.

Table Tennis

Carl Preen will attempt to help England regain their place in the top flight today seven months after his enforced absence cost them their European League Super Division status.

Results

Soccer AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First Division Arsenal 0, Chelsea 2, Manchester U 1. World Cup QUALIFIERS: Mexico 2, Honduras 1.

Sport in brief

prop Essens Faimalo, 30, from Leeds, Castleford have signed Swinton's 25-year-old winger Jason Roach for around £30,000.

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Scottish First Division club Aberdeen have been given a £20-million loan to build a £100-million stadium, North Lanarkshire Council...

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Liverpool fine Collymore £20,000, page 14

Rugby in turmoil over fixture chaos, page 15

SportsGuardian

Scotland query Johansson role

Patrick Glenn on double dismay that Scotland must play their tie against Estonia as well as losing McAllister against Sweden

SCOTLAND chose diplomacy rather than all-out war with Fifa yesterday after soccer's governing body ordered them to play Estonia, who failed to turn up for their World Cup tie in Tallinn on October 9.

Scotland had believed they would be awarded a 3-0 victory but Fifa ruled that the game must be played — preferably in Estonia — before March 16.

Scotland, clearly unhappy about a judgment from the organising committee which also ruled their captain Gary McAllister out of Sunday's match against Sweden at Ibrox, will direct the main thrust of their displeasure at the possible role played by Lennart Johansson, the Swedish president of Uefa.

The chairman of the World Cup organising committee, Guillermo Canedo of Mexico, was unable to be in Zurich because of illness. His vice-chairman, Johansson, is a former president of the Swedish FA.

meeting had stated publicly that the match should be re-arranged, participated in the deliberations and the verdict — especially in the case of McAllister — the Scottish FA will take the matter further. Jim Farry, chief executive of the SFA, couched the Scots' reaction in euphemistic terms but his dissatisfaction was evident. He and his officers confirmed that McAllister, who was due to be suspended for the Estonia match after receiving yellow cards in each of the previous ties

against Austria and Latvia, would now be banned from Sunday's match. The Scots felt that as the abandonment of the original match was not their fault, it is specifically the match with Estonia — whenever it is played — that McAllister should miss. "This is one of the points on which we are seeking clarification," said Farry, who expects to hear from Fifa today. "We don't know who made up the bureau of the organising committee who arrived at these decisions. "The committee had more than our case on a very busy agenda and it is possible that somebody like Lennart Johansson did not play an active part in the matter. We have to determine that, among other things. At the moment we cannot confirm that the committee meeting was chaired by a Swede."

The legend of Troy that did for Dallas



Vincent Hanna

TWO minutes of a football game this week told me as much about America as did Bill Clinton's re-election; a reminder that, in sport, offense may be the shop window but defense is its heart and conscience.

American football — like America — is about territory. Land hard-won must be ferociously defended by hard men, frontier men who make every third down the Alamo. The game is built on brute force, aggression, tradition, and money. I knew a businessman in Cleveland whose son was picked for the US Collegiate tennis team. When I congratulated him he looked dejected. "He's a great-looking kid, why isn't he out on the football field knocking people over?"

I love the game for another reason. More than any other sport it is focused on excellence, which, I grant you, is achieved by an insane degree of specialisation. Every game sees two huge squads of gifted individuals. Runners, tacklers and kickers are picked because they do that, and little else, better than anyone. But to see a Dan Marino or a John Elway throw is to catch a glimpse of perfection.

Speaking of Elway, he has been one of the surprises of this NFL season. He is 36 and has just become the second player in history to throw for 40,000 yards and rush for 3,000. The Denver Broncos have eight wins to one defeat and, with the Green Bay Packers and Pittsburgh Steelers, have become serious Super Bowl contenders.

To everyone's amazement, so have the Philadelphia Eagles (7-2), who went to Dallas this week and beat the Cowboys, as far-fetched as Chelsea winning at Old Trafford. The Eagles' coach Ray Rhodes picked up two "free agents" over the summer: a former youth-team trainer and part-time quarterback, Ty Detmer, and a cornerback from Miami called Troy Vincent.

Detmer stumbled into the team when the first-choice quarterback tore his knee in September. He has led them to four straight wins. At Dallas he pulled a trick

on the famed Cowboys defense at the end of the first half, by faking to throw and then lumbering slowly into the end zone for a "quarterback sneak". Everyone smiles; the Cowboys' offense would soon sort out the second half. But it is defense that wins games, and Presidential elections — by defending territory the hard way. As a coach once said: "This is not a contact sport, it's a collision sport. Dancing is a contact sport." The image works for politics too.

Let us meet Troy Vincent. He is 26 and, contract expired, he chose to come to the Eagles because he thinks they were up-and-coming. At Dallas he smothered Deion "Prime Time" Sanders out of the game. Sanders, a huge star, caught only two passes all day, and early in the second half his frustration was snapped and waded into Vincent. There was a brief brawny-muscle fight.

HERE is the moment: there are two minutes to go, Philadelphia lead 24-21. Troy Aikman has driven Dallas 17 field and angles a 19-yard pass to Michael Irvin.

The Cowboys are six yards from the Eagles' line. They can have three tries at the touch-down, then go for a simple field goal to tie and force overtime. Easy. The Eagles' defense moves right and Emmitt Smith, the Cowboys' lethal running back, sweeps left and finds himself one-on-one with Vincent three yards out. A hundred to one he scores. Vincent wrestles him into touch.

Second down and three: Smith hurls himself over the top of the scrimmage and is hit head-on by Sylvester Wright. The ground shudders. Smith is knocked back a yard.

Third down and four: "Go for the field goal!" scream the fans. Aikman throws hard at his line-backer wide open in the end zone. The Eagles' back James Willis hurls himself forward, intercepts, and staggers six yards with the ball.

Defenders are not supposed to pass, or run. If Willis lies down the Eagles have won the game. But he flips a pass, rugby style, to the battered Vincent. If the ball is dropped, they're both dead. Vincent holds it, cuts infield, and sprints the remaining 94 yards for a touchdown. 31-21... and goodnight Dallas.

How did it feel to become a Philadelphia legend in 10 seconds? "I'm tired. I've a bloody lip, bloody knuckles and turf burns," said Vincent. "It's what I came here for."

Busst has to accept his career is finished

John Duncan on a Coventry player in shock after hearing nightmare verdict

IT WAS the moment every professional footballer dreads. His worst nightmare, a moment that transforms a happy life, a fulfilling career into a round of hospital beds and treatment tables and a terrible nagging fear that everything he has worked for is over.

David Busst was not an international. He was not flash or fancy, arrogant or cocky, he was just a good pro. He had worked hard for what he had achieved and when Coventry City won a corner after 89 seconds at Old Trafford last April he had no sense that his life was about to be shattered along with his leg.

Yesterday, 14 operations and 18 months later, he was forced to admit that his long battle to recover fitness was over and with it his football career. The 29-year-old defender had been told by a specialist that he would not be able to play again at any level.

"The surgeon told me there was muscle wastage and I had suffered a permanent dropped foot," he said. "It is something I haven't come to terms with as it was something I wasn't prepared for. It is hard for me and my family to take. They were so proud of what I achieved."

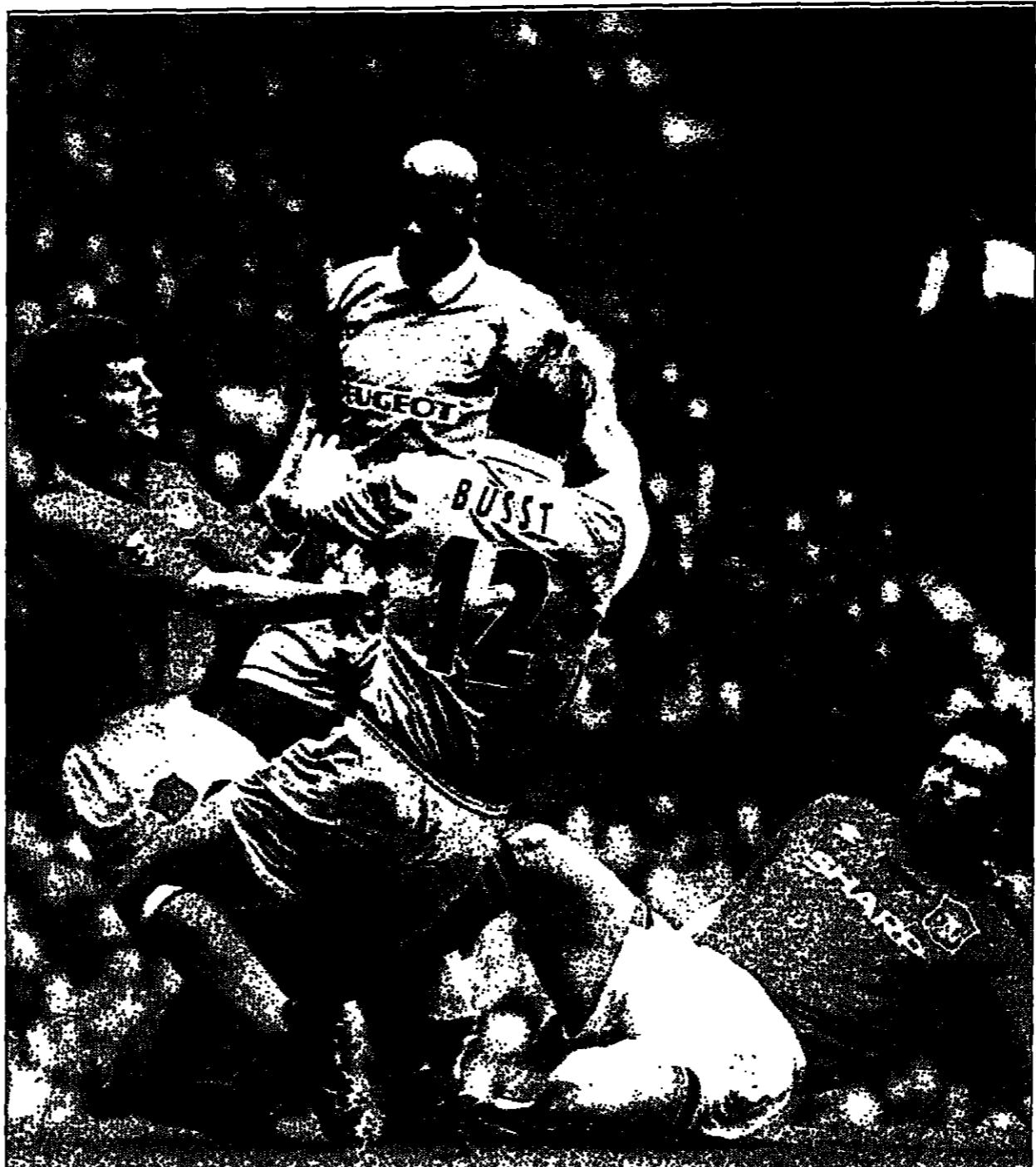
had taken a shattering blow to my leg and keeled over. I didn't look down as I knew something very serious had happened. I was conscious and I remember screaming to our physio to do something. "Since then his leg has had to be reconstructed. 20 years earlier it would have been amputated — with a metal pin holding the bone together. It was months before the leg was straight enough even to allow him to use crutches.

The worst feeling for a footballer is the isolation from his team-mates. "No one wants to know you," said one former professional. "It's like you are suddenly unclean, tainted with this thing that everyone is afraid of. No one can look you in the eye. It's like they are frightened of you because they are so frightened of what has happened to you."

Busst's fate would have brought a chill to one Merseyside home, that of Liverpool's defender Steve Harkness, who suffered a double fracture of his right leg 48 hours before Busst's injury.

Harkness was lucky. He has only now been able to start thinking of a return to senior football after seven months on the sidelines — seven months that have robbed him of a possible England place but have left him with the chance to pick up the pieces of his career. It is a chance Busst will never have.

Harkness resumed basic training a week ago and already he is being encouraged to enter into light physical contact during of Liverpool's daily five-a-side matches. Busst can only shuffle along the sidelines, nursing his still-aching leg and thinking of what might have been.



Freakish accident that ruined a life in soccer

The accident that befell David Busst was freakish and genuinely horrific, an open fracture of the right tibia caused when the leg was trapped between the ground and the challenges of Denis Irwin (left) and Brian McClair (right). His lower leg snapped in two and the bone pierced the skin, leaving the lower part of his shin hanging off. The sight so disturbed the United goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel that he had nightmares about it and had to have counselling.

Guardian Crossword No 20,805

Set by Hendra

Crossword grid with numbers 1-22 indicating starting positions for clues.

- Across**
- 1 One is on pot, in east coast resort, before end of July (3,4)
 - 5 Status-seeker at university receives shock (7)
 - 9 Dook briefs all around as a means of time-saving (5,4)
 - 10 Regret taking exercise for money? (5)
 - 11 Heroic record by Olympic finalists (4)
 - 12 Assistance with single portion of food abroad (7,3)
 - 14 Elegant tea-set put out (6)
 - 15 Powerful declinal point (7)
 - 16 Naked, Paddy is short of the stuff (7)
 - 18 Clothes for nights out? (6)
 - 20 Courage and cheek needed where road narrows (6)
 - 21 Entreaty from Copperfield (4)
- Down**
- 1 Eat small amounts — it makes sense (5)
 - 2 Wipe out boils, given treatment in a hospital? (7)
 - 3 It's love at first sight, Avenal (4)
 - 4 Pledge of secrecy demanded by Shaw? (3,5,3,4)
 - 5 Green pistachio nuts chopped by editor (15)
 - 6 Wingless insect rips at girl, painfully (10)
 - 7 Instrument for high peak calls? (7)

Crossword solution grid for puzzle 20,805.

- Crossword solution 20,805**
- 8 Fortune, possibly, made from the rans of exchanges (7)
 - 13 His interest is in houses with regal roots, perhaps (10)
 - 16 Spool of yarn needs key in weaving? (7)
 - 17 Valiant sort of Last (7)
 - 19 August ladies' man (7)
 - 22 He told stories of work under stormy sea (5)
 - 23 Such animals squealed when tipped upside down (4)

Ruddles County Riddles.

No. 12. Change for the Better

Peter, James and John had arranged to meet up with several other key members of their local village cricket team to watch highlights from an enthusiastic amateur video of their latest, greatest mid-season match.

Like any thoughtful hosts catering for grown-up tastes they decided to get in a basic stock of flavoured Ruddles County in convenient cans. They also agreed as friends do, to share the expense and each chipped in a fiver to the kitty. John volunteered to pop

round to the Off Licence on their behalf.

After he'd left laden with all the Manager of the Off Licence realised he'd overcharged him by £5. To rectify the situation immediately, he gave his new assistant 5 pound coins and instructed him to run after John and return the correct change.

The assistant who was on probation (in more senses than one) caught up with John, explained the situation but being a little economical

with the truth kept 2 pound coins for himself and returned 3 pound coins to John.

Unsuspecting John thanked him and returned £1 each to Peter and James, keeping £1 for himself. In effect this meant that the 3 friends had expended £9 each and the shifty assistant had nicked £2.

The strange thing is this £9 multiplied by 3 = £27.00 plus £2 that was misappropriated = £29.00.

What happened to the other £1?



At this is an accompanying illustration. The correct way to do the sum is £25 divided by 3 = £8.33 + £3 returned + £2 taken = £29.00. Most contracts offerer are...